

**SUBMISSION TO THE
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE
INVESTIGATION OF THE BOMBING OF AIR
INDIA FLIGHT 182**

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Since 1993, the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC) has been a leader in advocacy for victims and survivors of violent crime in Canada. The CRCVC advocates for individual victims and their families in order to assist them in obtaining needed services and resources, and lobbies for victims' rights by presenting the interests and perspectives of victims of crime to Government, at all levels.

In 2006, the CRCVC applied to the Policy Centre for Victim Issues for funding to conduct some preliminary research to identify the needs of victims of terrorism and develop recommendations to improve services for victims/survivors of terrorist attacks. Our interest in the topic came after we met with some of the families who lost loved ones in the September 11th, 2001 (9/11) and Air India Flight 182 terrorist attacks. They felt services, in both the immediate aftermath and the prolonged investigations following the event, were lacking from both provincial and federal governments.

As we made inquiries at various levels of government, we came to the conclusion that Canada is ill-prepared to meet the needs of Canadian victims of terrorism, regardless of whether an attack takes place in Canada or Canadians are affected by international terrorism.

Canada should learn from the experience of other jurisdictions, such as 9/11 and Oklahoma City, and raise the awareness in Canada of the need for pre-planning to be able to adequately respond to the short and long-term needs of crime victims. Several of these jurisdictions warned that the lack of advance coordination can hamper a smooth delivery of services to victims; that funding for responding to victims of terrorist attacks must not outstrip funding for other victim services.

There are many needs victims of terrorism share with victims of other kinds of violence, such as the need for information, support and counselling. The nature of the crime, however, requires a different method to deliver those services with special coordination, training and planning.

There are also some unique issues for terrorism victims, such as the ongoing discovery of body parts, identification of victims who are found (i.e. must get DNA from family), the ongoing fear of another terrorist attack, and re-traumatization, particularly through the intense media converge that naturally follows any such event. Anyone dealing with terrorism victims must understand these unique issues.

Given the focus of the Inquiry on the response to the families of those killed in the Air India Flight 182 bombing, this submission is intended to assist the Commissioner in developing recommendations to better serve Canadians. In the Terms of Reference, b (vi) makes reference to "the unique challenges presented by the prosecution of terrorism cases." Given the legal recognition of victims in the criminal justice system (i.e. victim impact statements), we believe we could offer the Commissioner some insight into the unique challenges of meeting the needs of victims in terrorism cases. We also believe the Commissioner will benefit from our input in assisting him develop recommendations pertaining to the relationship between the government and victims of terrorism.

It has been clear from the testimony provided during Phase One that the families of those murdered in the Air India Flight 182 bombing felt universally let down by their government, both in the immediate aftermath of the bombing and the weeks and years that followed. Despite the testimony of representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and their well-intentioned

efforts to provide assistance, Canada failed the families and the impacts of that failure remain with many of the families to this day.

Although our final report is not yet completed, we have obtained significant knowledge to pass on to the Commissioner for its purposes. Unfortunately, it is our general conclusion that the federal government¹ and the Department of Foreign Affairs specifically, has not learned from the experience of the families, as was seen with the response to the 9/11 families. While an argument has been put forward during the Inquiry that the 1985 bombing was unprecedented and no one was prepared, we know longer can rely on that as an excuse.

Because in the case of the bombing of Air India Flight 182, there were no survivors, the focus our submission will be on families of those killed in terrorist attacks.²

THE IMPACT OF TERRORISM

During the testimony of government officials, the Inquiry heard about preparations for responding to natural disasters.³ Victims of mass criminal victimization react differently than victims of natural disasters largely because of the human factor – that someone did this on purpose to hurt innocent people. There are higher rates of PTSD, depression, anxiety and traumatic bereavement, and other psychological disorders, and the symptoms can last longer.⁴ Media intensity, and the message presented by the media can also be a factor. Criminal victimization also strikes without warning, where often people have some advance warning of natural disasters.

While the impacts of more traditional violent crime, such as a financially motivated murder, are similar to terrorism related crimes, there are some unique aspects of terrorism that can be found in the testimony of the families, such as:

- misidentification of loved ones (some of the testimony suggested that more than one person/family attempted to claim one body);
- loved ones never found (the majority of victims were never found);
- media speculation/intensity;
- survivor guilt (witnesses who were originally planning to be on the plane spoke about this);
- speculation of how much the victim suffered; how scared he/she might have been in their final moments;
- legal battles (i.e. over compensation/insurance money); and

¹ Because it is our understanding that the Inquiry can only make recommendations with respect to the federal government, we are not providing specific information on the provincial and municipal governments and their role although in large part we echo the same concerns about their preparedness when it comes to responding to victims.

² At different times in the submission, we use the terms victims of crime interchangeably with victims of terrorism. From a practical victim service standpoint, victims of terrorism are victims of crime.

³ p. 1288 of transcripts.

⁴ *Mental Health Response to Mass Violence and Terrorism - Participant's Manual*, U.S. Office for Victims of Crime Technical and Training Assistance Center, 2006;
http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/facts/disasters/fs_terrorism.html; Boudreaux, E. et al, "Criminal victimization, posttraumatic stress disorder, and co morbid psychopathology among a community sample of women", *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, vol. 11 no. 4, October 1998, p.673

- complicated grief, depression and a number of other psychological and physical reactions associated with coping with trauma.

In 1996, the Forty-Ninth World Health Assembly adopted Resolution WHA49.25 declaring violence a major and growing public health problem across the world.⁵ According to research from the federal Policy Centre for Victim Issues, almost 70% of the cost of violence is born by victims.⁶

THE RESPONSE OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT

The testimony of the families has been consistent in two respects – the heartbreaking stories are painful to hear, and victims speaking with one voice about the lack of meaningful assistance and response of their government to their needs. Their message was virtually the same – there was little or no help from the Canadian government in the immediate aftermath of the bombing or in the days, weeks, months and years that followed. In fact, many of them said that the first time real assistance was given to them was by the British Columbia Crown victim services unit during the trial, which concluded in 2005. Words used during Phase One of the Inquiry include: inhumane, invisible, disrespectful and unacceptable.

Twenty years ago, Canada was unprepared for such an event. It was unprecedented in our history. But the purpose of this Inquiry is to make recommendations for improvement, and Canada remains largely unprepared to respond to a similar attack today.⁷

It is our intention to briefly address the various issues the families mentioned in their testimony and that have arisen in examination of witnesses and provide some information to the Inquiry about how those issues might be dealt with today:

1. Financial assistance: Many of the families spoke about the lack of compensation from the government; that the only compensation came from Air India, which some families felt, was inadequate. If such an attack were to take place today, it is not clear that there would be any government compensation for the families.

In Canada, compensation for victims of violent crimes is a provincial issue and provincial schemes vary quite widely from province to province.⁸ However, the provinces only compensate those injured in the province, so in the case of Air India Flight 182, the provinces would not provide compensation under their provincial schemes.⁹ Several U.S. states do compensate their

⁵ World Health Organization Report on violence and health, 2002.

⁶ Cost of Crime In Canada, Department of Justice Fact Sheet;
http://www.victimswalk.ca/archives_2006/fact-sheets/p2.html

⁷ Because Air India Flight 182 did not explode on Canadian soil, we will limit our remarks to that kind of incident. If such an attack were to take place on Canadian soil, the municipalities would be the first responder to victim needs, and, while we contend most municipalities have not incorporated a response to victims in their emergency plans, it is not relevant for the purposes of this inquiry.

⁸ Newfoundland and the three territories do not provide any compensation.

⁹ This problem can also be seen in the delivery of services to Canadians victimized abroad who return to Canada. Normally, victim services is a provincial issue but those government services are targeted towards investigating and prosecuting crimes committed in Canada and there remains little help for someone not in the system trying to access services or even find out what is available as was the case here. It was not until the trial that the families received adequate services from BC victim services.

citizens if they are victimized in a jurisdiction that does not provide compensation and the U.S. federal government also provides compensation to Americans victimized by terrorism abroad.¹⁰

Even if the provinces did compensate victims of an international terrorist attack, the awards may not be as high as some of the families received from the Air India settlement, and certainly no where close to awards paid out from the 9/11 fund (the average award was in the millions).¹¹ The average award in Ontario is less than \$10,000. For a single incident, if an attack were to take place in Ontario, the maximum award that can be paid is \$150,000 to be shared among all victims.¹²

After 9/11, the Ontario Government created the Ontario Emergency Victim Assistance Program for Victims of September 11th Terrorist Attack which included a \$3 million fund to assist the families of Ontario residents who were killed (most of the 24 Canadians killed in 9/11 were from Ontario). The Ontario fund, however, remained largely unused, likely because of the compensation awarded to families by the U.S. government. The federal government could, in agreement with the provinces, assist in providing financial compensation to victims of a terrorist attack in the absence of any other compensation.¹³

The Canadian government does not provide compensation to victims, not directly, nor through support of the provincial plans. In 1993, the federal government withdrew from its cost sharing agreement with the provinces for compensation. The federal government does not provide assistance to Canadian families to have bodies of murder victims returned to Canada.¹⁴ The Inquiry heard that loans, where Foreign Affairs advances funds to victims during the crisis, can be made for expenses. They are expected to be paid back, and are not granted without ascertaining that the recipient or their family has the means to return the funds.¹⁵

2. Training: Twenty years after the bombing, little has changed regarding what kind of training consular officers and staff receives regarding how to deal with victims of violent crime and terrorism. U.S. Consular staff undergo five days of training on victim issues alone. Canadian consular officers and staff do not undergo any comparable training.¹⁶

¹⁰ International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Program. To be eligible to receive reimbursement, an individual victim must be either (1) a national of the United States or (2) an officer or employee of the U.S. Government. In addition, the individual victim must have suffered “direct” physical or emotional injury or death as a result of an act of international terrorism.

¹¹ It is important to note that the awards paid out from the 9/11 fund were unique and a response to concerns about lawsuits against the airlines that would harm the industry. It is not clear that this kind of fund would be repeated and it is not consistent with awards paid out to “traditional” crimes of violence in the US. In London, after the subway bombings, victims were awarded the same levels of compensation that other victims of violent crime receive despite an outcry by many given what 9/11 victims were given.

¹² Other provinces have maximum awards for one incident. For example, in PEI, the maximum amount that can be paid to all victims for one incident is \$30,000; in Saskatchewan, the limit for one award is \$25,000.

¹³ In a letter to the CRCVC dated July 29, 2004, former Public Safety Minister Anne McLellan said the government would be open to considering, in collaboration with the jurisdiction(s) involved, the need for victim compensation arising from a specific terrorist incident.

¹⁴ The federal government does pay all costs associated with returning Canadian offenders to Canada to serve their sentence. For example, under the *Transfer of Offenders Act*, Canada paid all the costs associated with the return of convicted murderer Albert Walker from London so he could serve his life sentence in Canada. It is not for us to say whether this is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds, but we would expect that if Canada can pay for murderers to be returned, Canada should pay for the return of murder victims.

¹⁵ p. 404-405 of transcripts.

¹⁶ It is the experience of the CRCVC in working with other Canadians who have been victimized abroad that the lack of training remains a serious issue.

Consular officers and staff are sympathetic people who undoubtedly try their best to deal with people in crisis, but dealing with the father of a murdered child requires a different level of training than someone whose passport was stolen. It even requires a different approach than someone whose loved one was killed in a natural disaster.¹⁷

Testimony provided at the Inquiry suggests that those on the ground tried their best, but their best did not include any knowledge or training to deal with murder victims.¹⁸ Even the officials who testified said they felt awkward. They said they did not know what to do for the families or what to say.¹⁹ Training is a way to provide officials the confidence to properly deal with people in crisis.

We have reviewed the chapter on “death” in the Consular Affairs Training Manual (which is a total of 4 pages including the cover page) as well as the relevant section of the Consular Framework Document (another page and a half). The training, which lasts about one and a half hours, appears to be focused on administrative issues and is silent on dealing with the emotional issues/trauma that families of homicide will experience. It is our understanding that the training on this chapter is provided by current and/or former Consular Bureau employees. It does not appear that anyone with any expertise in trauma or bereavement issues is part of the training.

3. Immediate vs. long term needs: Many of the families have testified to the fact that neither their immediate needs nor their long term needs were met. The needs of people in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack are largely practical, such as financial assistance to visit the scene, information, assistance with bureaucracy, child care, etc. While they do need support, they do not yet need “counselling” in the traditional understand of the word.

Many of the families did say that after they returned home or at various times over the last 20 years, they could have used some counselling but may not have had the necessary resources. *This need has been identified in our own research.* While officials testified that part of the responsibility of Foreign Affairs was to direct victims to services once they returned,²⁰ the families consistently said this was not offered to them. The CRCVC has heard this from other victims we have assisted.

Testimony provided by Maureen Basnicki, whose husband Ken was killed in 9/11 indicated that Foreign Affairs was of little assistance to her and it was not until the provincial government tracked her down that she began to receive some assistance.²¹ She was not given a contact person from Foreign Affairs, despite testimony that it was practice to do so. In our research, we found other Canadian victims of terrorism who say they received little or no assistance from the Canadian government either. One 9/11 widow told us that her calls to the Foreign Affairs hotline were not helpful.

4. Identification process: One of the most important issues for families in terrorist attacks is to determine the status of their loved one. With the bombing of Air India Flight 182, it became

¹⁷ p. 1298/1302 of transcripts.

¹⁸ One family member testified that an official said to him that the victims “did not die with pain.” While well-intentioned, the fact that a grieving man remembers this statement 21 years later is an indication of the negative impact it had (p.530 of the transcripts).

¹⁹ p.393-4, 1130 of the transcripts.

²⁰ p. 1305-6 of the transcripts.

²¹ p.1265-1274 of the transcripts.

obvious fairly quickly that there were no survivors. The focus then shifted to recovery and identification of the bodies. Only 131 bodies were found meaning the majority of families were left with no remains of their loved ones.

The identification process can be a challenge for Canadian officials when an attack takes place in a foreign country because they must cooperate with the laws and procedures of the host country. There were delays in the Air India case which were beyond the control of Canadian officials.

It is important that people have the most up-to-date information as possible about the procedure and the reason for delays. The Air India families needed to be kept up to date about what was being done to recover the bodies, prepared for the chance that not all the bodies would be found, to be told why they were delays with the identification process, how it would work, etc.

Officials in charge during a crisis brought by a terrorist attack may be of the view that there is no role for victims at the scene, but it is unrealistic to expect that families will quietly stay home for three or four days waiting, rather than attend. It was evident during Oklahoma, 9/11 and the London bombing that families and loved ones went to the scenes and officials must be prepared for this. Families will want to visit/attend the scene in the immediate aftermath, and must be allowed to do so, as long as authorities deem it is safe to do so.

5. Assistance provided by Foreign Affairs: Despite testimony by departmental staff, little progress has been made in developing a thoughtful and effective response to victims of terrorism. The written evidence submitted by Foreign Affairs supports this. Take for an example the document regarding consular contingency planning.²² The chapter refers to catastrophic incidents, including terrorist attacks, but focuses on the steps taken leading up to and including an evacuation of citizens and personnel. It does not discuss how to address the needs of citizens who have been victims of terrorism or other disasters, nor does it refer to the possibility of citizens wanting to come to the scene of a disaster, as has been the case with all terrorist attacks affecting Canadians in the recent past.

In the experience of the CRCVC, Foreign Affairs' response to "ordinary" victims of violent crimes abroad is inadequate, let alone responding to the needs of hundreds of victims at one time, as may occur with a terrorist act.

The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs has not even developed a pamphlet for Canadians about what to do if you are a victim of a crime in a foreign country. Other jurisdictions, like the U.S. and Britain, have developed these kinds of pamphlets. The Canadian government gives its citizens more information about what to do if they get stomach cramps than if they are sexually assaulted. More attention is paid to Canadians charged with crimes than Canadians victimized by crime.²³

Victims of crimes may be treated the same as other Canadians who require assistance. For example, if a Canadian loses their passport, the Consular Office can assist that person in getting a new passport. But if a Canadian is attacked or robbed and the passport is stolen, the focus of Consular staff is *still* the passport, and it is not clear that the treatment is any different. This may, in part, be due to the lack of training.

²² Air India Inquiry evidence, exhibit P-94A, "Consular Contingency Planning"

²³ This is not a suggestion that assistance should be denied to Canadians charged with crimes aboard, the statement is intended to call to attention the differences in treatment afforded to offenders, when compared to victims.

The United States Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of Overseas Citizens Services has specialized victim services. The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs has a specific section on its website for Americans victimized abroad, and they initiated a program to improve and expand assistance to crime victims.

The U.S. Office for Victims of Crime created the *Terrorism and International Victims Unit* to assist Americans victimized abroad and their families in the U.S. The TIVU provides a variety of services to victims of crime including assistance in accessing services, which may include traveling to trials and briefings; obtaining information on the criminal justice process; acting as a liaison to foreign embassies and consulates in the U.S. to provide information on victim assistance resources when foreign citizens are victimized in the U.S.

6. Information: Every major study on victims of crime has highlighted their need for information. In cases of terrorism, families need information about their loved ones, why the attack happened, what the risk is of another attack, what the procedures are for rescue operations and/or body recovery, process to obtain death certificates, etc. Because of the nature of terrorist attacks, accurate information may be difficult to obtain and some families of the Air India Flight 182 bombing have said they had to rely on the media for information.

Foreign Affairs has created a 24/7 1-800 line for Canadians in need of assistance to call, but our own research suggests that one or more of the 9/11 families who used this line were not given any meaningful assistance or information. In the words of one of the woman whose husband was killed in the World Trade Center:

“...I thought maybe the consulate would help me...or maybe they would (have) more access to information. So I tried the number I had (for the consulate office in New York) and was greeted with an answering machine. I was (then) talking to a friend of mine who checked online and found a phone number in Ottawa that is supposed to be attended 24 hours a day. I called that number and did get in touch with someone. I told her my situation and that I was trying to get in touch with the consulate in NYC. She wasn't sure what to do and said that she would call back. She did call back about an hour later with a phone number, which was the number of the answering machine. When I told her that, she asked what I needed to get in touch with them for. I explained that I could use some help trying to locate my husband. She said that they probably were trying to do that. I said okay and that was the end of the call. I did not feel very reassured. The next morning my parents arrived in New York City. On the local news channel they were talking about a location at the New York City Hospital where you could go to file a missing persons report with the NYPD if you suspected a loved one was missing in the WTC. I did not feel I could leave my hotel room until my parents were there in case my husband called or showed up. I left them in the room and I walked over to the missing person's location....The next time I remember the consulate calling was on the Thursday. They said they would file a missing persons report. I said that I had already done that, but they took down my husband's information...I think that the Consulate contacted me about a week later to arrange some things for DNA samples to help with the identification process...I am very disappointed that the consulate was not more helpful in trying to help one of its citizens who was a victim of crime. I realize that the situation was shocking but I think that there was more that they could have done to help.”

Other jurisdictions have recognized the importance of accurate regular briefings by officials in authority as being as important services to families. This was highlighted in the lessons learned

from Oklahoma, 9/11 and London. It also includes explaining why some information is not available or why certain things are happening the way that they are, such as body identification.

One of the services provided to victims during the trial process was a secure website for families. This could be done as well as part of an investigation to keep families informed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Family Assistance/Compassion/Reception Centers (FAC) – Variations of this scheme have been used in the Oklahoma City, 9/11 and London bombings with significant success. They are a place for families to gather near the incident. One of the things that is consistent in many of these incidents, which may vary from other kind of tragedies, is that families of those injured or killed often want to visit the scene.

It would have been preferable if there had been a central place for families to go when they arrived in Cork. The London Family Assistance Centre Provisional Guidance Document describes a FAC as “a sophisticated facility where bereaved families and survivors can receive information and appropriate support from all the relevant agencies without immediate need for referral elsewhere. This support will take various forms and may require the provision of a wide range of services...”²⁴ In Oklahoma, a church was used. In 9/11, a hotel was used for families of those injured or killed at the Pentagon.

Depending on the situation, the purpose and mandate of the FAC may differ. For example, if one had been set up in Cork where all the victims were from somewhere else, it would be different than the FAC set up in Oklahoma where virtually all the victims lived in the community.

The Canadian officials could have worked with their counterparts to set this up. For the purposes of Air India Flight 182, the main function of the FAC would have been to enable the timely two-way flow of accurate information between families and responders, such as the process for identifying bodies, why there was a delay, what families could expect, etc. Families could have been given daily briefings about the bombing, even if not much information was known at the time to ensure the most accurate information was being provided. Work could have been started with families regarding the transportation of remains, the return to Canada, etc.²⁵

In order to ensure accurate information, high ranking officials should be the ones providing the information. For example, someone from the Medical Examiner’s office could have explained the issues relating to identification of the bodies; someone from the Canadian government could have explained the process related to returning bodies and what the Consular office could do to assist, etc. A Memorial table could have been set up for families to display photos of their loved ones.

²⁴ www.londonprepared.gov.uk/londonplans/emergencyplans/fac.pdf

²⁵ Obviously, the Air India Flight 182 involved a large number of Canadians and the only reason officials from Cork were involved is because that was where the plane exploded. The response of the Canadian government, with the obvious cooperation with Cork officials, might be more involved than a situation like 9/11 where the attack was on American soil and most of those killed were Americans. In that kind of situation, it would not be appropriate for the Canadian government to take an active role in providing services or setting up a FAC. However, given that many of the families of the Canadians who were killed lived in or about the Toronto area, a smaller FAC type operation could have been arranged where the federal government could have worked with its provincial counterparts in victim serving agencies to address the needs of those families in the Toronto and other areas.

2. Pre-planning/coordination – The failure of Foreign Affairs to adequately respond to the families of those murdered in Air India Flight 182 may, to some extent, be explained by Canada’s lack of experience or anticipation of such an event. But after the Air India bombing, Oklahoma City, 9/11, Bali and London, that is no longer an acceptable excuse. If there has been one lesson learned from those experiences, it is that plans for responding to the needs of victims must be in place before the next attack.

Pre-planning and coordination is essential and it is not clear that Foreign Affairs has done this work yet. One of the lessons from 9/11 was “existing systems for emergency management or terrorism planning...were not developed to take into account the human impact of mass criminal incidents and did not recognize the social, psychological and economic toll...”²⁶

3. Training for Consular officers and staff – This training needs to take into account the needs of those who have suffered traumatic or violent victimization, or those who are in crisis. Their needs are unique, and the victims must be approached differently than those who present with issues relating to illness, lost documents, visa problems or who suffered loss or harm from a natural disaster. Consular training must identify these issues, and should include a discussion of the effects of mass trauma, and how to address the needs of the victims. Efforts must be made to ensure that the tools are in place to assist with victims of crime, victims of terrorism, and people in trauma. We recommend that Foreign Affairs work with the Public Health Agency, Department of Justice and Department of Public Safety to develop the training.

4. Creation of an international victim unit within Foreign Affairs to coordinate training – Testimony provided at the Inquiry highlighted the fact that the needs of families do not end when the “incident” is over. They needed to be connected to services when they returned to Canada. Many spoke of the need for some kind of counselling. Some of these services may already exist but are difficult for families to connect with, especially when dealing with their grief, raising children, working, etc. this unit could be responsible for developing protocols and policies to ensure that the emotional and practical needs are being met.

5. Develop information pamphlets for victims of crime/terrorism to be posted on the website and available from any consular staff responding to a tragedy – These pamphlets can contain general information about what Foreign Affairs will endeavour to provide, so that victims can understand immediately what assistance they will receive, as well as what issues/challenges victims may face. They can then be updated during a crisis to provide specific information to the victims. There should also be a crisis line devoted to provision of information for victims who can not reach consular staff or access the internet.

6. Create compensation fund to assist Canadians victimized abroad – Canada should consult with the provinces and budget for/develop a fund to allow for compensation where no other compensation exists, or where current compensation schemes cannot address the needs of victims of terrorism. As it stands, this would include all Provinces and Territories in Canada. The fund would likely fall under the Policy Centre for Victim Issues in the Canadian Department of Justice, allowing them to use federal funds to serve victims of terrorism and mass violence;

7. Develop rapid deployment teams of trained professionals who can assist families in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack. The Public Health Agency is doing work in this area and we recommend Foreign Affairs consult with that office.

²⁶ *Responding to September 11 Victims: Lessons Learned from the States,*” Office for Victims of Crime, 2004, p. ix.

8. The federal government should develop a guide for delivering victim services in cases of mass criminal victimization based on the model used by BC Victim Services during the Air India trial.

Appendix A – CRCVC Mandate

- *To assist victims of crime and their families in dealing with the sentence administration or parole authorities to ensure that they are kept informed, if they so choose, of actions which affect their future safety and well being;*
- *To, where appropriate and authorized by law, appear with victims of crime and their families and assist them in securing legal counsel at hearings in which they may participate as victims of crime;*
- *To act as a resource centre for victims by providing understanding and knowledge of the Canadian Criminal Justice System;*
- *To actively present the interests and perspectives of victims of crime to Government, at all levels and it's various agencies;*
- *To generally promote the interests of public safety through the principles of openness and accountability within the Criminal Justice System and the Sentence Administration Process;*
- *To act as a centre of information addressing the issues affecting victims of crime throughout Canada;*
- *To promote and enhance the interaction and exchange of information and perspectives among other agencies and groups within the Canadian Criminal Justice System;*
- *To assist victims in obtaining and understanding information on offenders; and*
- *To assist victims in understanding the parole process, and to attend parole hearings with or on behalf of the victims.*