

Ref: A1651398

 August 2018

Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime  
Legislation, Policy and Programs  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Sir / Madam

**Ombudsman submission regarding the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime Options Paper**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime Options Paper (the Options Paper). I note the emphasis placed on developing an accompanying accountability mechanism within any new Victims of Crime (VOC) framework.

Under the current accountability framework for victims of crime under the *Victims of Crime Act 1994*, my Office can be referred complaints by the Victims of Crime Commissioner where a resolution has not been reached. In practice, however, only one VOC complaint regarding ACT Policing was received by my Office during the term of the previous Commissioner. My Office has also received and investigated a small number of approaches regarding the former Commissioner himself during his six year term. I would envisage this aspect of my oversight to continue under any Charter framework.

The Options Paper proposes complaints management mechanisms for the Charter, either involving the Commissioner or my Office. In my view, having regard to the nature of the Charter and the complaints, this role would sit more appropriately with the Commissioner and her office, although I would envisage no change to the role I outlined in relation to receiving complaints about the Commissioner.

I note that elements of the ACT integrity framework can overlap. Regardless of the accountability mechanism adopted by the ACT Government for the Charter, my Office and I will continue to work closely with the Commissioner and her staff to ensure complaints processes operate efficiently, and potential complainants are not turned away.

I also welcome ongoing engagement on these matters with my Office. Victims of crime are often complainants to my Office, and the agencies and community groups that work with victims of crime are well placed to refer individuals to my Office where issues arise within my jurisdiction.

You are welcome to contact me directly on (02) 6276 0149 if you have any questions. Alternatively, your office may wish to contact the Senior Assistant Ombudsman responsible, Mr Paul Pfitzner on (02) 6276 3769.

Yours sincerely



Michael Manthorpe PSM  
ACT Ombudsman