



VICTORIA POLICE

Submission to the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

The Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs inquiry into the *Social Security Amendment (Supporting Australian Victims of Terrorism Overseas) Bill 2011* and the *Assisting Victims of Overseas Terrorism Bill 2012* has invited submissions on the two Bills.

Victoria Police supports any endeavours to improve services to victims of crime. This legislation seeks to establish a framework to provide financial assistance for Australians and close family members of Australians who are injured or killed overseas as a result of an overseas terrorist incident. The proposed legislation will address the current gap in financial assistance available to Australian citizens and residents who become victims of terrorist acts overseas.

Victoria Police notes the important safeguards that restrain an offender or a person who assists or encourages an offender from seeking compensation under the scheme.

At present the legislation appears to only allow for compensation to secondary victims if the primary victim dies. Victoria Police suggests that consideration be given to extending the legislation to allow for financial assistance for close family members in cases where the primary victim has not died as result of the terrorist act.

In some cases for example, close family members may require financial assistance to travel overseas to support victims of terrorist acts. Close family members may also require counselling or treatment as a result of the primary victim's injuries sustained in the terrorist act.