

Meeting with the Victims' Commissioner and CICA

20.08.2025

Introduction

The Chief Executive Officer from the Office of the Victims' Commissioner met with the Deputy Chief Executive Officer from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority on 20 August 2025 at their quarterly catch up.

General Updates

CICA recognise that their communications with victims need to be accessible to all. As part of their ongoing communications review, they are exploring whether they can automatically acknowledge medical evidence submitted by a victim, their GP or other specialist. CICA aims to use this acknowledgment to provide an update on the application and provide information about what will happen next.

CICA continuously reviews its letters and is grateful to the Victims' Commissioner for the feedback given on drafts provided following the last meeting. CICA is reviewing the language used in its communications – collaborating and utilising style guides that can help them communicate in plain English and make their messages clearer and easier for victims to understand.

CICA will also explore using 'text message' and 'email' to provide information. There are several factors to consider before rolling this out including ensuring the tone of the messages meet the standard that victims expect.

Artificial intelligence (AI) was also discussed, such as whether this will be used in communications. CICA confirmed that AI may be useful in providing information to victims, but further exploratory work is needed.

The OVC CEO pointed out that CICA's annual report states there has been a 4% increase in the number applications, whilst the live caseload has increased by 15%, suggesting applicants having to wait longer. The CICA DCEO explained the absolute number of cases being dealt with within 12 months was at an all-time high, but the percentage of such cases has dipped below the 70% target to 66% due to the increase in the number of new applications.

CICA is managing this by ensuring operational teams are working across all cases (older and newer) to ensure that all cases are being progressed through the system as quickly and efficiently as possible. CICA has also increased staffing to respond to the increased demand. Staff undergo comprehensive training over a six-week period, which is followed by a period of consolidation and mentoring.

Parliamentary updates

High level budget allocations to Government departments have been agreed for the next three years, 2026-27 to 2028-29. Ministers are looking at the victim support model including compensation. Further detail on this is likely towards the end of the year.

The CEO at the OVC will be retiring on the 18 October; the campaign is open for the new CEO.

Next steps

Plans will be made for the upcoming new Victims' Commissioner to meet with the CICA DCEO.