



In Australia someone is reported missing every 18 minutes by someone else who cares

Australian Federal Police response to missing persons

The Commonwealth Government has reinforced its commitment to missing persons and their families through additional funding to establish the National Missing Persons Co-ordination Centre (NMPCC) within the AFP.

The additional funding provided to the AFP by the Commonwealth Government, provides for a range of initiatives to be progressed, including the roll-out of the Minimum Nationwide Person Profile which will provide a searchable, accessible and real-time database of missing person's information.

Working with state and territory agencies to develop and implement an effective approach to supporting families will also be a priority.

A key component of the work of the NMPCC is to raise awareness regarding the significance of

missing persons as an issue within the Australian community, both through National Missing Persons Week and other opportunities.

The development and delivery of a strategically focussed education program will ensure that mainstream community, and service providers, are continuously provided with information regarding missing persons, the impact on families, and the AFP, state and territory police and non-government agencies response to this significant issue.

Effective communication mechanisms are pivotal to ensuring a co-operative and collaborative response. Writing and distributing a regular e-news bulletin will be one of a number of mechanisms the NMPCC will use to facilitate effective and cohesive communication across the national missing persons sector.

The NMPCC looks forward to working with both police and non-police agencies in realising an enhanced response to missing persons and their families and friends.

Australian Institute of Criminology contracted to conduct national research

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) has been contracted by the National Missing Persons Coordination Centre and the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit to produce targeted national research.



The research is focused on identifying those groups at risk of going missing and identifying preventative strategies to reduce the incidence of missing persons.

The research will provide a more substantive understanding of the missing person's population which can guide the development of future policy and service delivery at both a national and state level.

The research is due for completion prior to June 2007.



Sarah met with colleagues to discuss the international approach to counselling for unresolved loss relating to families of missing persons.

Sarah's Fellowship Report can be found at <http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/missingpersons>

Churchill Fellowships provide heightened understanding of issues associated with people going missing within Australia

Sarah Wayland, Counsellor with the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit, Attorney General's Dept of NSW, travelled on a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 2006.

Sergeant Mark Samways, NSW Police has recently travelled on a Winston Churchill Fellowship. Mark met with international colleagues to discuss missing person's cases with a focus on risk assessment models, investigation methods, missing person's procedures, and

communication between law enforcement agencies and non-government organisations. Mark's Fellowship Report is due for completion in February 2007. When completed the Report will be uploaded onto the NMPCC website.

National approach to supporting families and friends of missing persons

The National Missing Persons Coordination Centre is commencing a project to identify and implement a model for the delivery of support services to families and friends of missing persons across Australia.

Currently there exists only one designated service within Australia, the Families & Friends of Missing Persons Unit (FFMPU) which is a NSW based agency.

It was identified in the National Missing Persons Policy, endorsed by the Australasian Police Ministers Council in June 2006, that support for families was crucial in easing the trauma experienced when someone goes missing.

The project will commence early in 2007 and will draw on the expertise developed in the FFMPU since its establishment six years ago. The project will also draw on the experiences and understanding gained through the recent Churchill Fellowship awarded to Sarah Wayland, Counsellor with the FFMPU.

For further information please contact Leonie Jacques, Coordinator, NMPCC on 02 6246 2137.



DVD "Missing" – A joint initiative of the NSW Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit and NSW Police Missing Persons Unit

The DVD "Missing" project is an initiative of the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit (FFMPU) at the Attorney General's Department of NSW and the NSW Police Missing Persons Unit (MPU). The DVD was developed in response to recommendations in the report *Aboriginal Young Females Reported Missing Reports to Police: Which Way for Prevention and Service.*

The DVD has been jointly funded by the Attorney Generals' Department of NSW and NSW Police and was produced by the NSW Police Public Affairs Unit with support from the FFMPU. The product is aimed at raising awareness of missing person issues for Aboriginal communities, and in particular for Aboriginal young females in the 12-15 year age group.

Key messages in the DVD include:

- > being missing is not a crime;
- > the importance of reporting someone who is missing to police as soon as possible if the person's whereabouts are unknown and if there are concerns for their safety and well being;
- > information, counselling and support is available for families

and friends of missing persons through the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit at the Attorney General's Department; and

- > help is available for people who feel at risk of going missing.

The DVD is currently being piloted in a number of rural and remote locations through Community Technology Centres. To date the DVD has been presented at Taree, Robertson, and Gilgandra. Presentations planned for 2007 include Cootamundra, Eden, Wellington, Wilcannia, Kyogle, Mungindi, Boggabilla and Griffith. Specific invitation flyers are being distributed at the local level for each presentation and relevant staff and community representatives are welcome to attend.

The DVD is available through the FFMPU. An order form can be located at the Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit website at www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/missingpersons. Copies of the DVD can also be made for distribution within the terms of the copyright conditions.

For any further information please contact Ms Lee Purches Senior Project Officer, Families and Friends of Missing Persons Unit (02) 93743014.

Mrs Booths Enquiry Bureau

What are the origins of The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service? And why does it feature within the Army's programme? Despite being known for its wide-ranging social and community programme, the Salvation Army is a mainstream church, with membership in well over one hundred countries around the world.



by Colin Fairclough
Honorary Member of ABI
Lieutenant-Colonel, Retired,
of the Salvation Army

First recorded enquiry

In February 1882, an article appeared in The Salvation Army's journal 'The War Cry', telling of a young lad, who had run away from his home in Yorkshire. The following month, the paper reported that Harry Stott had been seen in a Sussex village, and was on his way home. This appears to be the first record of the Army's active concern for 'missing persons'.

The concept of an 'Enquiry Office for Lost People' was set out by William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, in his internationally-acclaimed master-work 'In Darkest England and the Way Out', (1890). In fact, the tracing programme was in place before the book was published.

In 'The War Cry of 11 July 1885, William Booth wrote of a 'host of mothers and fathers and guardians who want information about lost children ... an army of fallen girls. Something *must* be done. Something *shall* be done. And at *once*.

A week later there appeared 'an offer of help in seven languages'. Apart from the Chief Central Office in London, it was proposed that 'auxiliary Offices of Enquiry would be opened as soon as possible in Paris, New York, Chicago, Toronto, Melbourne, Sydney and ultimately in all the principal cities of the world where the Army is at work'.

In the same year of 1885, and related to this project for lost girls, a department specifically to deal with the problem of missing people was set up. The unit was placed under the direction of Booth's daughter-in-law Florence, and was known as 'Mrs. Booth's Enquiry, Bureau'.

A detective department

On 16 May 1891, 'The War Cry' carried a full page article about the 'Work done by The Salvation Army Detective Department'. The writer of the article says, I use the word 'detective' advisedly, as to all intents and purposes the work is carried on upon the lines of private enquiry offices, or detective agencies-to say nothing of police searches. But this particular service is possessed of one very great advantage over the others. It has agents through out '**The Entire Inhabited Globe**' (the paper's emphasis). The reporter tells that in the three months to the end

of 1890, '590 new cases were received by the department and of these 132 were traced'.

The journal also stated that 'it is prepared to undertake, at moderate rates, detective cases and investigations of certain descriptions, for those in a position to pay'. The office dealing with enquiries was known as the Investigations Department, a title which lasted until 1990.

On 6 November 1897, 'The Daily Mail' newspaper presented an article in which it headlined the department as 'A New Scotland Yard'. It stated that 'it is part and parcel of the Army', and essentially international'. (I understand, incidentally, that the Missing Persons Bureau of the Metropolitan Police Service did not come into being until 1929!)

Internationalism

In due course, as The Salvation Army expanded throughout the world, so this work of tracing relatives also developed and widened its range. Of all the enquiries handled in the United Kingdom office each year, somewhere between a fifth and a quarter have an international dimension. Either the person sought is living overseas, or the enquirer is living in another country, and looking for a relative in the UK.



Raison d'être

But why? Why should The Salvation Army - a Christian church - offer a tracing service? After all, this is expensive work. There is no external funding. There are no grants from government, no handouts from the expensive work. The National Lottery and a heavy deficit to Salvation Army resources. So why is Salvation Army engaged in this work? For me a head of the service, the answer to this lay in the basic foundation of our movement. Our international *Mission Statement* is in two parts and declares: 'The Salvation Army's mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (you would expect that), and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.' To meet human needs - that is our Why?

Many folk can be seen to be needy: For example, the alcoholic; the homeless and down-and-out; the critically ill; prisoners; the mentally and physically disabled; refugees; disaster victims. It is often possible to see that they have a problem, and The Salvation Army seeks to provide assistance to many of these people through its vast range of social services. But not all needy people look like people in need. People who have someone missing from their lives are often needy indeed -and yet they look like you and me, or our neighbours, or the members of our clubs.

Personal

Let me at this juncture declare a personal interest in the matter of 'missing persons'. When I was 5 years of age, I myself became one of them, at a time when my family was living at Fleetwood in Lancashire. Arriving home one evening in the school holidays, I was immediately whisked

off by my mother to the police station. She had reported that I was missing - 'a little boy in a mustard-coloured coat' was the description. I was suitably admonished by the policeman for causing anxiety to my parents. Incidentally, I was not lost. I had simply spent the day down at Fleetwood's ferry beach, watching the boats come and go!

Road to the Family Tracing Service

My formal association with the Family Tracing Service did not begin until 1983. I had served as a Salvation Army officer (minister for religion) since 1959, holding appointments in the northeast of England, the Island of St. Helena, South Africa, the Philippines, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Canterbury.

At the time I joined the department, it was still called the 'Investigation Department', a title which had been acquired in the late 1890s. One of its tasks in those early days was to 'investigate' jobs which were advertised, to determine whether they might be suitable for Christians, especially Salvationists. When giving lectures, I was often asked to explain the title, and felt that perhaps a change might be appropriate. I proposed to my leaders that Family Tracing Service was fairly precise designation: We were concerned with the wellbeing of the family; we were engaged in tracing; and we offered a service. The new name was agreed in 1990. The word 'missing' has not been used in the department's title at any time - at least not in the United Kingdom. When, in 1990, I was elected as an affiliate member of the Association of British Investigators a newspaper column, had the headline 'Sainly Sleuth joins the gumshoe brigade'!

During the nineteen years that I was in the department, more than 91,000 new cases were taken on. Of these, around 75,000 (81%) were concluded successfully.

In retirement, I receive around 50-60 invitations a year from various organisations to speak about 'People Who Need People' - amazing stories, amusing stories, fascinating stories, heart-rending stories. Including an account of the brother and sister whom I reunited after no contact for 81 years, a story which still appears in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Objectives

When I became head of department, I set out something of our purpose in a statement, which was used in monthly newsletters, annual, reviews and other publications. *'The Family Tracing Service exists for the purpose of trying to restore (or to sustain) family relationships, by locating relatives who have become out of touch. Loss of contact may have taken place within the past few weeks, or many years ago. Successful investigations often bring a sense of 'belonging' to those who have never known blood ties - restoring in them new feelings of dignity, of self-worth and of life-purpose'*. Not so much 'finders of missing people', but rather a bureau of hope for those with broken homes, broken relationships and broken hearts.

Permission has been given by Chris Cole, Salvation Army Family Tracing Services, to reproduce this article.