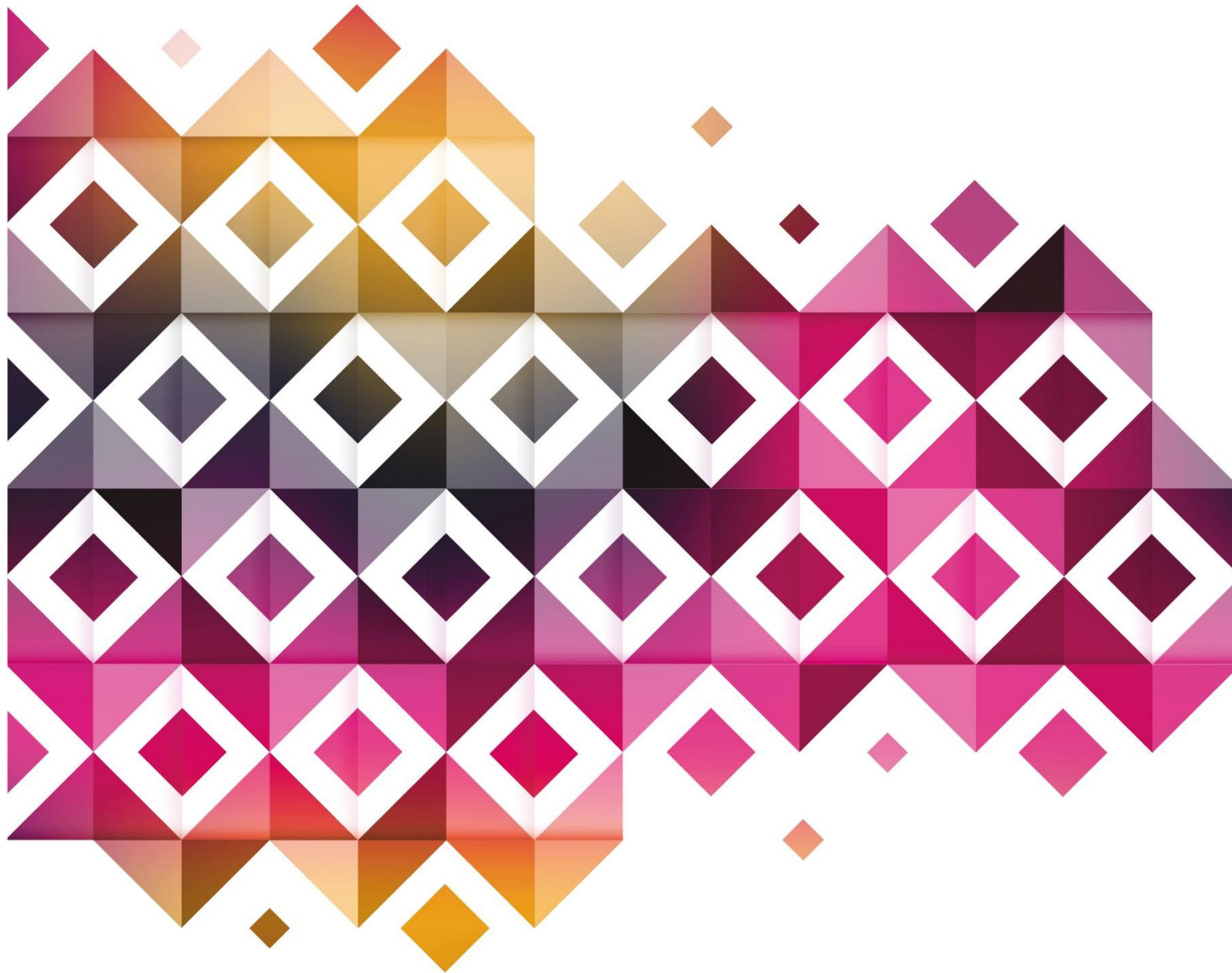


Struggling for Justice

Entitlements and Experiences of Bereaved Families Following Homicide Abroad

23 October 2019



Foreword

To lose a loved one to murder is a horrific and devastating experience, no matter where the crime takes place. However, as this report sets out, for families of people murdered abroad, there are additional financial, legal and logistical burdens. The case studies in this report clearly show how these complexities and frustrations exacerbate the emotional turmoil of sudden bereavement.

Yet these families have fewer entitlements than other bereaved families. And this needs to change.

The families of victims murdered abroad are not entitled to criminal injuries compensation, unless the death occurred as a result of a terror attack. To me, this is particularly unjust, especially when you bear in mind they will have just the same additional financial burdens as a victim of terrorism abroad and significantly more than someone bereaved at home.

The victims interviewed for this report told us about the continual frustration of getting access to translated documents and interpreters. I want these families to have the same access to interpreter and translation services that are on offer to victims and defendants in the UK where English is not their first language.

I also want to be sure that agencies, including the FCO, National Homicide Service and the police are working together holistically to provide timely information and help in a sensitive and supportive way. And the entitlements for these victims need to be in the Victims' Code of Practice, so that they can have the same legal force as entitlements received by bereaved victims of murders in the UK.

I am grateful to the charity Murdered Abroad for all the support and assistance they have given us in preparing this report. I would also like to thank the twelve families who shared their often very painful experiences with our researchers. The information they have given has been critical in helping us to reach our findings.

I hope the Government will respond positively to this report and give this group of victims the support they justly deserve.



Dame Vera Baird QC

Victims' Commissioner – England and Wales

Acknowledgements

The Victims' Commissioner would like to thank the charity Murdered Abroad and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Deaths Abroad for introducing us to many of the bereaved families that took part in this research. Murdered Abroad is a support group for families, partners and friends of victims of murder and manslaughter abroad. Most importantly we would like to thank the families of victims of homicide abroad who shared their experiences in the case studies presented in this report. The Victims' Commissioner is also grateful to Julian Hendy from the charity Hundred Families for peer reviewing this report.

Table of Contents

Recommendations	5
Introduction.....	8
Entitlements of Victims of Homicide Abroad	10
What Works in Supporting Victims of Crime	19
Case Studies.....	20
Methodology.....	20
Key themes from the case studies	20
Conclusions.....	22
References	28
Appendix 1: Victim Case Studies: Key Themes	29
How victims are informed of the death.....	29
Support from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office	31
Repatriation.....	34
Translation and interpretation.....	37
Legal representation	39
Support from banks and insurance companies	40
Support from Charities.....	41
Support from UK Police.....	44
Financial support	47
Post mortems and inquests	49
Appendix 2: Case study details.....	51
Appendix 3: Parliamentary question regarding the number of British murder and manslaughter cases abroad per year.	53
Appendix 4: Glossary of acronyms.....	54

Recommendations

“There are typically 60 to 80 ‘abroad’ homicide cases a year. In the big scheme of things, this is not very many. We are a pretty exclusive club. From a population of 66 million people in this country we are literally one in a million. There are 43 Police constabularies, around 127,000 police officers. Each force would only get 2 of our cases in a year, some more and some less. If we look at the Coroners’ Service there are 109 coroner jurisdictions in the UK, some employing multiple coroners. So, each coroner probably only sees an overseas homicide once in 16 months.”

The charity, Murdered Abroad

We make the following recommendations:

1. There should be a dedicated forum, where all key agencies, the FCO, MoJ, Homicide Service¹, NPCC, meet with representatives from victim organisations and possibly representatives from the insurance industry to review the process and consider how it might be improved. These meetings need not take place more than twice a year and could be hosted by MoJ and the FCO. **Responsible agencies: MoJ, FCO, NPCC, Homicide Service.**
2. Consideration should be given to the FCO being listed in the Victims Code of Practice (VCoP). **Responsible agencies: MoJ and FCO.**
3. Key entitlements for victims of murder abroad should be included in VCoP. These might include an entitlement to be referred to the Homicide Service, a right to receive key information from the FCO and to receive consular support. **Responsible agencies: FCO, MoJ, NPCC.**
4. The FCO should regularly review the resource allocated to the Murder and Manslaughter Team to see if it is adequately resourced to meet the needs of victims and to ensure the team receive the support and training it needs in dealing with people suffering with trauma and who have complex needs. **Responsible agency: FCO.**
5. The police officers tasked with delivering the death notification should be able to download a notification pack with FCO contacts and further information, which can be left with the victim. The FCO should share with police whatever information they have as to the circumstances of the death to assist police in explaining what may have happened to the family. **Responsible agencies: NPCC and FCO.**
6. The expectation should be that only police officers who have been trained to deliver death notifications should be allocated to this role wherever possible. **Responsible agency: NPCC.**
7. All victims should be referred to the Homicide Service within one working day of giving their consent for their details to be forwarded. The Homicide Service should

¹ The charity Victim Support is currently commissioned to deliver the National Homicide Service. Throughout this report the National Homicide Service (NHS) will be referred to as the Homicide Service or HS, to avoid confusion with the National Health Service which is also abbreviated to NHS.

make an initial contact within 48 hours. **Responsible agencies: FCO and Homicide Service.**

8. In cases where a victim has died in suspicious circumstances there can be an undue delay in bereaved families having access to support services provided by the Homicide whilst the responsible jurisdiction determines whether to treat the death as a homicide. In such cases, the UK police should be asked to advise whether, on the available information, they would be treating the death as suspected homicide. This decision should determine whether it is appropriate to refer the case immediately to the Homicide Service instead of waiting for a decision from the responsible jurisdiction. One suggestion is that this role might fall to the National Crime Agency (NCA), so as to ensure a consistent approach. **Responsible agencies: NPCC, NCA FCO and MoJ.**
9. Bereaved victims of homicide abroad should be eligible to claim Criminal Injuries Compensation. **Responsible agency: MoJ.**
10. As well as being eligible for Criminal Injuries Compensation, the awards should reflect the significant additional costs facing victims of homicide abroad. **Responsible agency: MoJ.**
11. The FCO should assume responsibility for translating key documents for all victims. These might include a post mortem report and initial investigation reports, thereby helping victims to understand the circumstances which led to the death of their loved one. It might also include translation of criminal charges against defendants and the judges' sentencing remarks. **Responsible agency: FCO.**
12. In the case of victims who do not have appropriate travel insurance, we recommend the FCO should as a last resort, repatriate the body, and bill the victims afterwards. Victims should not be forced to dispose of the body of their loved one in a foreign country on grounds of cost. **Responsible agency: FCO.**
13. All consulates be required to review their lists of local lawyers and translators and quality assure those on the list. Victims who use lawyers and translators from the list should be asked to provide feedback. **Responsible agency: FCO.**
14. The Homicide Service and MoJ agree on what information might be given to victims that helps them understand the basis for determining the allocation of discretionary financial support. **Responsible agencies: MoJ and Homicide Service.**
15. Once the new MoU has been introduced, the NPCC considers how to collate data showing when victims of homicide abroad are and are not allocated an FLO by the Chief Constable and that this information is made available to the national forum referred to in recommendation 1. **Responsible agency: NPCC**
16. The NCA should be asked to provide a coordination role in the allocation of FLOs by local police forces when the NCA have deemed the case would be a homicide investigation if it had occurred in the UK. **Responsible agency: NCA**

17. Arrangements are put in place to alert victims when the British perpetrator of a homicide abroad is repatriated to a British prison and that the victim is given an opportunity to join the Victim Contact Scheme. **Responsible agency: HMPPS.**
18. There needs to be clarity as to which agency will support bereaved victims in dealing with intrusive media interest and agencies should agree on who this should be. **Responsible agencies: NPCC, Homicide Service, FCO, MoJ.**

Introduction

“[T]here were 58 British citizens murdered abroad in 2009/10. The effect on their families of such a homicide will be similar to those bereaved by homicide in England and Wales with the added complexities, frustrations and difficulties of dealing usually with a foreign police and justice system and the logistical problems alongside this [...]

“When practical problems emerge following the homicide, which they do for the majority [...], repatriating a body following a homicide abroad, difficulties over the criminal justice process, disputes over post mortem or release of the body for burial - families frequently need specialist advice and help, and will be unlikely to have the resources to buy legal help and advice [...]

“Some cases bring with them particular financial burdens. For example, where a death occurred abroad, extra costs faced could include high travel and accommodation costs, repatriation, translation of documents, and fees for foreign legal representation.”

(Louise Casey CB, Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide, July 2011, pages 10, 11 & 29).

The Foreign and Commonwealth estimated that every year between 60-90 British citizens lose their lives under violent/suspicious circumstances, mostly as a result of murder or manslaughter.² This report looks at the treatment of those bereaved by homicide abroad.

Organisations that support bereaved families of homicide abroad may refer to them as ‘families’ rather than ‘victims’ given that the victim is felt to be the person that was murdered abroad. Bereaved families of homicide both in the UK and abroad are recognised in the UK as victims in their own right. For this reason, we will refer to those bereaved by homicide abroad interchangeably as victims and families throughout this report.

We have spoken to the key agencies responsible for providing this group of victims with support and we have also liaised with the charity Murdered Abroad, which provides peer support and campaigns for better treatment for these victims. We have also undertaken twelve in-depth interviews with victims and heard their experiences. We are grateful to these victims for sharing their stories with us.

Nine years ago, the then Victims’ Commissioner, Louise Casey, highlighted some of the complexities and frustrations faced by these victims in her report “Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide”. In the intervening period there have been steps forward in addressing some of the issues she highlighted. The FCO has set up a dedicated Murder and Manslaughter Team, the Homicide Service has more experience of dealing with the needs of these victims and in 2012, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme was extended to include bereaved victims of homicide arising from terror attacks. This is positive progress.

This report does not set out to address every problem facing these victims. We cannot comment on or change criminal justice processes in other jurisdictions. Nor have we been able to look at support given to victims by consular staff or the financial support available from insurance companies.

² See Appendix 3: Parliamentary Question on British victims of murder and manslaughter abroad.

Instead, our starting point in this report is that the effect of homicide on bereaved families is always traumatic and distressing, regardless of where the death occurred. Victims therefore deserve all the emotional and practical support they need to cope and recover from this devastating crime. This report has reviewed the level of support currently available and considered whether it was sufficient to achieve this purpose.

We recognise these victims face insurmountable obstacles in their battle for justice in another jurisdiction. These might include practical difficulties, such as repatriating the body of their loved one, or trying to get information about the progress of the criminal justice system in another jurisdiction or getting documents translated. Despite the determined efforts of agencies and charities, we concluded there is still so much more we need to do to support these victims.

This report identifies where agencies might work better together to provide a coherent package of support, with clearer lines of accountability.

All bereaved victims of homicide, regardless of where the murder occurred, have a right to basic information which enables them to understand what has happened and how the relevant justice system is taking the matter forward. Without having this information, the ability to cope and recover is significantly more difficult. We believe there is more the government needs to do to help this group of victims access this information.

We recognise the significant financial hardship facing these victims, particularly those who cannot rely on support from insurance companies, and call for better access to criminal injuries compensation and more transparency in the allocation of additional discretionary financial assistance.

We identify areas where the victims ought to be able to provide feedback to services, so that this lived experience can be used to improve future support.

We recognise there will be a financial cost arising from our proposals. However, it should be emphasised that all we are calling for is additional support to create a level playing field between this group of victims and all other bereaved victims of homicide. Nothing less, nothing more.

We owe it to these victims, who have suffered so much and too often have been left to fend for themselves.

Entitlements of Victims of Homicide Abroad

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Murder and Manslaughter Team (13 November 2018)

SAMM Abroad (now re-named Murdered Abroad), a charity that provides information, telephone guidance and peer support to people bereaved by homicide overseas, attributed many of the problems to the organisation of the FCO, and suggested that a specialised central unit for Murder and Manslaughter cases be created in the FCO. SAMM Abroad's proposed solution is:

A small, centralised unit within the FCO with specially trained staff to act as the principal point of contact for families. They would be responsible for dealing with Desk Officers and extracting the information for families. This would have the following advantages

- Families would not be disrupted or traumatised by the movement of Desk Officers.*
- Liaison with other agencies would be more effective as staff would have immediate access to case files and other information.*
- Developing FCO policy would be more effective as the unit would be able to observe recurrent issues and spot failings more immediately.*
- The FCO's institutional memory would be vastly increased. If information regarding local practices and services was captured in a central location it would provide immense benefit to families requiring support in the future.*

Evidence to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee 2014

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Murder and Manslaughter Team was established in 2015, in part as a response to a report by the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, published in 2014.

The team has 5 members of staff and is based in the FCO. It liaises with 776 consular officers across 268 countries and supports victims who have lost loved ones to homicide outside of the UK.

The manager of the team stated that the team recognise the needs of this group of victims and are committed to providing tailored assistance to them. Each officer is responsible for a different part of the world.

When a death occurs, the local police abroad report it to the appropriate British consulate. The consulate in turn informs the Murder and Manslaughter Team, who try to get as much detail as they possibly can. This triggers what is termed as the "death notification". The relevant British police force is notified and is responsible for informing the family. The team recognise the importance of informing the family directly and before they hear about it from the media, although this is not always possible.

Once the death notification has been issued by the police, the Team make contact with the family by phone to offer condolences and explain what they can do to assist. They explain the process going forward, checking that the family member is okay and able to take in what they are saying and whether they wish to consult with other family members. The Team

needs to be sure that the family understand the available options open to them, although they are not expected to make immediate decisions. For example, the family need to understand that if the body is not repatriated there cannot be an inquest.

They also provide the family with relevant information, for example, a list of local funeral directors in the country where the death occurred. They have to raise with the family on the issue of costs, including whether the deceased had travel insurance and what the terms of the insurance might be. Where the deceased has comprehensive insurance, this should cover the cost of returning the body to the UK.

In the meantime, the consular staff will liaise with the authorities in the jurisdiction where the death occurred. The staff will be able to inform the Team about issues such as whether there might be an inquest, where the body is being held, when the body is likely to be released, whether body organs have been retained and local practice in terms of embalming. They will also make enquiries about the state of the body when it was found.

Some consular staff will visit the body, but this depends upon the individual member of staff. This can be very distressing and staff cannot be required to make this visit.

The consul will always register an interest in the case, but they have no power in a foreign jurisdiction and are unable to influence the course of action taken by the jurisdiction. However, they will try to secure regular and prompt updates on progress, which are then shared via the Team with the family.

Some victims want to fly out to the country concerned and the Team have been working with travel companies to see what can be done to make this journey as easy as possible. This includes making sure the family have a quiet place to go when they reach the airport, etc. In some cases, a consular member of staff will meet the family when they arrive but this is not always possible. The consul might be several hours away from the place where the death occurred and might have very few staff.

The Team will always offer the family the support of the Homicide Service. They understood that the Homicide Service will sometimes offer to assist victims in the cost of flights. They stated this assistance is means tested and in some cases the full cost will be met, in others there will be a partial covering of costs.

The Team recognises the frustrations for victims. Local practices in different jurisdictions can vary and can also be very lengthy. In some cases, it might take up to 7 years to progress a case to trial for example. The team will be there for the family throughout this process and will seek regular investigation updates, but cannot force the other jurisdiction to move more swiftly or to take another course of action. They will also seek updates on the trial but cannot commit to attending the trial. If the process is particularly slow, the FCO will try to raise this through other routes and occasionally, Ministers might get involved.

The Consular Law Enforcement Advisor will assist the Team and the family in understanding the local practices and legal process. The team will always explain to the family from the outset the limitations as to what they can do and the likely frustrations.

“You won’t always like me and I won’t always be able to tell you what you want to hear”. (FCO Murder and Manslaughter Team Manager)

In countries that have a “secrecy act” the family must register with and employ a local lawyer and the Team will encourage them to do this.

The Team stated that in the four and a half years it has been in operation, it is getting better at supporting the families and is looking to improve the process, for example:

- The recent work with the aviation industry in supporting those families who want to fly out to the country where the death occurred.
- The Team has a Coronial Liaison Officer who is building links with the coroners' courts.
- They were not aware of the government's plans to introduce an Independent Public Advocate. This is not something they had been consulted on.
- The FCO gives the Homicide Service £100k a year as a fund to help support these families in meeting their costs.
- The team have also identified legal firms that will offer victims pro-bono legal advice and support. However, pro-bono work is also means tested.
- The Team have drafted 15 information leaflets.

When asked whether any consideration has been given to making the FCO an agency that falls under the Victims Code, the Team said that this had not been considered but, without seeking advice, could not see any objection in principle. The MoU set out the minimum level of service that victims might expect and it might be possible to incorporate this into the Code.

When asked if there was any formal forum of the agencies who have signed up to the MoU to make sure that the process was working end to end, the Team confirmed there was no such forum, but the Team liaised regularly with the other agencies on a one-to-one basis.

The Team was undertaking a deep dive review looking at the work that it does and how it might be improved. It was difficult to map the whole process and there was the added complexity that throughout this process there is a family that was suffering from bereavement.

A representative of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) acknowledged that in the past, support for this group of victims had been poor. However, they felt that since 2015, and the establishing of the FCO Murder and Manslaughter Team and the provision of the MoU, this support was improving. Inevitably, there were still complaints about the FCO, and it would take time to get the support arrangements working as well as is required, but the police felt that there were definite improvements.

One example cited by the NPCC was in November 2017, the FCO and NPCC held a day's seminar for all police force and FCO staff, and police offered training to consular staff to make them more aware of the needs of the families.

Representatives of the Homicide Service also felt that FCO support for victims was improving. They felt that victims' expectations of the FCO might sometimes be greater than the FCO was able to deliver. For example, they might expect the FCO to be present at every court hearing and to be actively involved in the investigation. In reality, neither of these were feasible and this resulted in victims feeling disappointed.

The Homicide Service representatives thought it would be helpful if the FCO could provide victims with a fact sheet for different countries, helping the victims to understand what to expect.

They also observed that nearly all interaction between victims and the Murder and Manslaughter Team was over the telephone. FLO cases can be protracted and go on for years. The victim can be speaking to the same FCO officer throughout all of that time but never meet them face to face.

When there were face-to-face meetings, usually the family have to travel to the FCO. This can be expensive and in some cases daunting for the family, some of whom may never have travelled to London before.

Occasionally, the FCO officers visit the victim for a face-to-face meeting. When they do, it is much appreciated by the family and makes a “massive difference”. The Homicide Service (HS) representatives felt that it would be beneficial if more FCO officers could visit the families in their own homes. A recent example was when an FCO official travelled to North Wales to meet a family. This was much appreciated.

Homicide Service representatives also referred to the money it received from the FCO to help victims with expenses. There was also a view that the money given by the FCO “*doesn't go that far*” and this ought to be reviewed.

The representatives also raised whether FCO desk officers might be more pro-active in keeping victims informed. There were occasions with legal service officers commissioned by the HS would come back and inform the victims more quickly than the information filtered through the FCO. This resulted in victims being better informed than the FCO and the HS staffing having to update the FCO.

The charity, Murdered Abroad, expressed concern about the information given to bereaved families by consular staff in respect of local lawyers:

Is the FCO giving families a list of foreign lawyers good enough? Who is vetting the list to make sure it is up to date and are the lawyers quoted genuine and qualified to assist the families of murder victims?

This was a theme picked up in our case studies.

The charity also expressed frustration that bereaved families were often having to make their own arrangements for translation of documents and interpreters. They highlighted a report on the gov.uk website which showed the Ministry of Justice handling over 38,000 requests for language interpreter and translation services a quarter in 2016, across tribunals, civil, family and criminal courts. Given that there are 60-90 homicide abroad cases each year, they struggled to understand why these cases could not be given support from the public purse.

Homicide Service (20 December 2018)

“The Homicide Service was established to provide tailored and intensive one-to-one support to bereaved families for as long as they need it. The service is managed and provided by the charity Victim Support and is funded by the Ministry of Justice. The allocation of a paid professional advocate to each murder and manslaughter case is designed to ensure a holistic, effective and consistent coordination of services via a dedicated caseworker to the bereaved family. The caseworker provides an ongoing needs assessment of the family members which may lead to a range of service provision, such as emotional support, practical help, with re-housing, benefits, funeral arrangements and specialist services such as counselling, translation and interpreting, legal advice, travel and repatriation”

Memorandum of Understanding 2012³

³ Murder, Manslaughter and Infanticide of British Nationals Abroad: Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Coroners' Society of England and Wales (January 2012) Available at

Bereaved victims following homicide abroad were entitled to be given the support of the Homicide Service (HS), the same as bereaved victims of domestic homicide. The HS advised they did not treat this group of victims any differently to any other group of victims. The referral pathway for the victims was initiated by the FCO and the HS always await notification of consent before they contact the bereaved family members.

They will make contact by telephone in the first instance and having introduced themselves, they would describe the service provided by the HS and how they might be able to offer support going forward.

The HS allocate a caseworker to the family and contact the desk officer in the FCO to get a briefing on what has happened, as well as information relevant to the needs of the bereaved family, such as any plans to repatriate the body.

A face-to-face meeting will be arranged with the family so that the HS case worker can introduce themselves and explain how the service operates. They recognise that recently bereaved victims often suffer from trauma and this makes it difficult for them to absorb information so they will provide them with a booklet.

They can offer victims some emotional and psychological support without having to go through the National Health Service. This enables victims to access support much more quickly than would otherwise be the case.

As part of the initial assessment, the case worker will carry out a needs assessment and identify the family's priorities. This will enable them to put together a support plan, setting out actions both for the HS and for the family.

The HS were keen to explain that they will always want to avoid "dependency" and from the outset they and the victims will need to be aware that at some appropriate point in the future the HS will need to "exit". This will need to be in everyone's mind from the outset so that there is a clear understanding from all sides that the support on offer will not be a permanent arrangement.

The FCO (Murder and Manslaughter Team) will put the caseworker in touch with the relevant consulate. The HS is able to help in arranging the repatriation of the body and the funeral costs. They estimate that only around 20% of the bereaved victims they deal with have a comprehensive insurance cover that they can draw upon for financial support. Therefore, for many victims, there can be a huge financial strain coping with the costs arising from the death of their loved one. The HS can offer some support with travel and accommodation costs if the family want or need to travel to the country where the death occurred. They try to "means test" the level of support offered and this financial support needs to be signed off at director level. When asked about the process of means testing, the HS described it as "*more art than science*" and that it was a "*light touch*" means test. There is a budget for these costs and care has to be taken to operate within it. Staff are conscious of the need to "*avoid throwing all of the budget in one direction*". They always look to help victims as they recognise that travelling to the country where the death occurred can be expensive and traumatic. They look to help the victims with the basics.

They have families who are living on benefits and in those cases, they are likely to need all their costs covered. If the family members are in employment, there is an expectation that they can meet some of the costs.

When it comes to funding, staff are encouraged to *“think outside the box”*. For example, the HS managed to persuade the airline, Virgin Atlantic, to meet the costs of four family members to fly out to Australia to attend the funeral of their loved one.

The costs can be high. For example, it recently cost £12k to repatriate two bodies from Thailand.

The HS assist victims in claiming from insurance policies. This can include policies other than travel insurance.

There are solicitors in the UK who offer legal advice on a pro-bono basis. Recently, one firm travelled from London to North Wales to speak to the family face to face and this was greatly appreciated.

Where legal advice is needed in the jurisdiction where the death occurred, the HS can again offer assistance.

Some families are able to claim criminal injuries compensation from other jurisdictions or they will submit a civil claim for damages. Some solicitors will assist with these on the basis of no-win, no-fee, though families may still incur some costs for court fees, etc. In their experience, the proportion of families able to claim compensation is low – *“it doesn’t happen very often”*.

Legal processes in other jurisdictions can take a very long time. For example, in some cases, a trial can take a year to complete. HS will offer therapeutic support both throughout and after the trial is complete. It can be very stressful for the victims, waiting and watching for so long.

The HS does assist victims with translation costs but they described translation as *“a very expensive process”*. Having a local lawyer can help get around the need for a verbatim translation of lengthy documents, as they can explain the gist of what the document is all about. The HS representatives felt that translation on its own was often not terribly helpful as often the document *“needs context”*.

The HS representatives stated that there was not a Police Family Liaison Officer (FLO) in every case – *“it happens in some but not all cases”*. They felt that an FLO could be useful to victims as a point of contact.

When asked why the HS was not a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding between the police, FCO and Coroners’ Service and whether the HS met with other agencies to look at the end to end service being provided to victims. The representatives advised that the FCO had recently been in touch to arrange such a meeting between all the agencies involved in providing victim support. The FCO Murder and Manslaughter Team had only been in place since 2015 and there was a sense that it was starting to really grip the process.

In December 2018, the charity Victim Support received a new contract for the provision of the Homicide Service. One of the plans for the new contract was that the HS would have a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for this group of victims, who could act as a point of liaison between the service and other agencies.

The HS sometimes draws on the services of the charity Lucie Blackman Trust (sometimes referred to as Missing Abroad). The consensus was that the charity was very effective at booking flights, sorting out visas and dealing with arrangements at very short notice. One groundbreaking development which was initiated by the Trust, was a video-suite set up and

funded by the HS to enable victims to monitor court proceedings remotely. In a recent case, the family were able to follow proceedings of a trial taking place in Florida without having to leave the UK.

The HS team felt that FCO cases were significantly more complex than murder cases within the UK. There was no one-size-fits-all for victims and caseworkers had to be adaptable in responding to the specific needs of each case. There was a sense that as time went on, caseworkers were becoming much more skilled and adept in doing so.

The HS team felt their staff were doing an *“excellent job”* in supporting victims. The main impression of the people they were supporting was a *“sense of helplessness”* as well as feeling that they had a *“lack of control over what was happening to them”*. This was much more pronounced than other bereaved victims. It was as if the victims were bystanders.

The Police – Commander Stuart Cundy (3 December 2018)

“It is good practice to deploy Family Liaison Officers (FLO) in cases involving the murder, manslaughter or infanticide of British nationals overseas. The decision on whether or not to deploy an FLO rests with the Chief Officer of the appropriate Police Force and a key part of this decision process is whether there is an investigative role for the FLO.”

“When a FLO is deployed they will work under the direction of an SIO who will decide on the Family Liaison Strategy”

Memorandum of Understanding 2012

The UK police normally have no jurisdiction in the investigation of crimes committed abroad. However, section 9 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1867 does make provision for police investigations into murders in foreign jurisdictions if the suspect is a British national, it is legally possible for such defendants to be tried in UK courts. However, s.9 investigations were *“the exception rather than the rule”*.

The police can sometimes assist victims by engaging with law enforcement authorities in other jurisdictions, for example to share information. Individual police forces in England and Wales are able to decide whether they will agree to requests by foreign jurisdictions to cooperate with them in their investigations. Such requests for UK assistance are made through the FCO and require the Home Secretary's approval.

The police work with the FCO in cases when a British citizen is murdered abroad. Sometimes the first they hear of the murder is through the media, otherwise forces are notified by the FCO and are requested to inform the families.

The MoU sets out that the discretion to provide victims with a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) rests with the Chief Constable. It is not automatic. An FLO should only be appointed in cases where the force has taken the decision to appoint a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO). An FLO should not be appointed without an SIO being in place. It is important to note that the primary role of the FLO is that of an investigator, not simply to provide support, but as part of the investigating process.

Practice in deciding whether to appoint an FLO and SIO is variable across forces. Current guidance states that it is good practice to appoint in these cases, forces can make their own decisions. The current MoU between the Police, FCO and Chief Coroner in relation to deaths abroad is in the process of being re-written. The updated MoU will include a

presumption in favour of appointing an SIO/FLO, but the final decision will still rest with Chief Constables (CC).

There will be cases where there is no tangible benefit in appointing SIO/FLO, and most CCs will base a decision on the circumstances of the case.

When asked about what the benefits might be to the victims in having an FLO it was acknowledged that pressure to appoint an FLO in every case was in part due to a desire to have “*parity of esteem*”. FLOs are closer to the investigation, which might result in victims feeling better informed. The FLO gave the victims a dedicated point of contact and inevitably, they could provide the victims with an element of guidance and support.

FLOs also act as a conduit of information in cases where there is an inquest and where the coroner will need information. In any case where there is an inquest there would be an FLO/SIO. They would endeavour to speak to the investigating team in the foreign jurisdiction to seek information that would assist the coroner.

Certain cases might always attract an SIO/FLO, such as victims who have lost a loved one in a terrorist attack. In these cases, it will be an officer from counter-terrorism. In other cases, such as death as a result of a road traffic incident, an SIO/FLO is unlikely.

The National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) stated it was impossible to offer any national data which might show the proportion of cases where an FLO is made available as this information is not held centrally.

There were frustrations both for the police and the FCO in that they often cannot provide victims with the information that they want. The police and the FCO cannot direct investigating authorities in other jurisdictions, only seek to persuade.

The charity, Murdered Abroad, believed it was important for all bereaved victims of homicide abroad should receive the support of the police:

“[T]he UK police could and should take a far greater role in supporting the families of abroad cases who live within the area of their police force/constabulary. Many when they are approached individually do want to help. Our police know about investigations and how to deal sympathetically with victims, for a start they are obliged to speak to families face to face. An SIO has so much knowledge that can be of use to the victim’s family.”

The FCO representative observed that FLOs will often take the lead on a case-by-case basis and will pull together all the available information required for the inquest. However, the offer of an FLO is not automatic and is at the discretion of the Chief Constable. Some forces do make the offer but others, such as the Met, do not.

There were no meetings where all the agencies involved in supporting the families got together to discuss how end to end support was working. However, there were periodic meetings of FLACSS, where FLOs, MoJ and others met with victim support groups to discuss wider issues concerning support for victims of homicide. Murdered Abroad and the FCO were sometimes represented at these meetings.

Criminal Injuries Compensation

In 2012, changes to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS)⁴ included an entitlement for families of British nationals bereaved by terrorism overseas to claim compensation. This was the first time a victim of a crime committed abroad could claim from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Agency. However, families bereaved by all other forms of homicide abroad have not been included. Bereaved victims of murder abroad can face substantial costs, for example, in repatriating the body or using the services of an interpreter when seeking justice. The rationale behind the distinction is not clear.

The MoJ explained that the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICS) was set up to provide support for victims of violent crime committed within the UK. EU citizens can also claim if they become a victim of violent crime whilst in the UK. This entitlement is reciprocated to British Nationals in other European Union states. This is a requirement of the EU Directive on Victims, though European schemes are not always equivalent to the UK scheme and may be subject to means testing. Each EU Country's arrangements are different, there is no standard EU criminal injuries compensation scheme.

It is acknowledged that the position post Brexit is unclear. The expectation is that for the foreseeable future, the existing arrangements will remain in place. There is no indication that other states will withdraw their offer of support to British victims and the Government is unlikely to want to take pre-emptive action.

MoJ also explained that compensation for Victims of Overseas Terrorism (VOTCS) is a separate scheme and was introduced under Home Office legislation in 2012. This was following a spate of terror attacks in which there were British victims injured in terrorist incidents outside the UK. Unlike the CICS, the nationality test for VOTCS includes a residency and nationality test. The nationality test includes nationals of a member state of the EU or the EEA, but does not include nationals of member states of the European Convention. There is currently no provision in the CICS for compensation for victims of homicide outside of the UK (other than terror).

The charity Murdered Abroad makes the point that compensation schemes within the European Union differ in their eligibility criteria and many families experience difficulty in making a claim for compensation despite CICA helping families with their application. Some schemes are means tested, unlike the CICS in the UK, and this alone can mean many victims might be unable to claim. Some EU schemes are less generous than the UK. Murdered Abroad also believes that irrespective of the EU Directive, there are countries within the EU, which are not known to have paid compensation to any families of British nationals bereaved in their territory.

Additionally, some EU countries compensate their own nationals even when the crime occurs in another EU state.

⁴ Ministry of Justice (2012) Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/808343/criminal-injuries-compensation-scheme-2012.pdf Accessed August 2019

What Works in Supporting Victims of Crime

In March 2016, the Victims' Commissioner's Office, in conjunction with Portsmouth University, published a rapid evidence assessment of the best available international evidence on what works in supporting victims of crime (Wedlock and Tapley, 2016).

The report found that there are four key principles that work in supporting victims of crime. These are: information and communication; procedural justice; multi-agency working; and professionalised services, particularly those that provide the victim with a single individual advocate or victim case worker to help them in their whole journey throughout the criminal justice system.

This report into the experience of victims bereaved by homicide abroad is based upon these four key principles, evidencing what level of services and entitlements are required by victims bereaved by homicide abroad.

Issues around information and communication are compounded in these cases by language barriers, differences in criminal justice systems abroad and the distance between victims' families in the UK and the investigations being carried out abroad. This report has found that a lack of available interpretation and translation of key documents leaves victims struggling to gain information about what has happened to their loved one and how subsequent investigations are proceeding.

Victims bereaved by homicide abroad often struggle to receive procedural justice compared with victims in the UK. In some cases, they struggle to get information on how the death occurred and what action the authorities are taking, if any. In cases where the defendant is a British national, some victims have felt that the defendant has received more support from the British authorities than they have been offered, despite the fact they are grieving for a loved one.

When a death has occurred in suspicious circumstances abroad there may not be the rigorous investigation that UK victims may expect. Victims of homicide have some key entitlements, but if the jurisdiction abroad has not deemed the death to be homicide, victims are not eligible to receive entitlements from the Homicide Service despite the death obviously not being of natural causes. This leaves victims struggling to achieve a sense of procedural justice.

No UK agency has an overarching view of the end to end experience of victims of homicide abroad. Agencies that victims engage with including the FCO, UK Police, Homicide Service, coroners and other victim support providers do not regularly meet to discuss how victims' experiences can be improved. The report finds a lack of multi-agency working in these cases both within the UK and often abroad.

Victims' taking part in research for this report cited several issues regarding a lack of professionalised support. They report being informed about the murder of their loved one in a less than professional way and for example being referred to the FCO by jotting down the number on a newspaper. The report finds that victims often must repeat their stories to multiple officials, often knowing more about the case than the authorities and sometimes having to inform the FCO themselves about progress in the case.

The 'What Works' review found that victims would benefit from an independent victims' advocate to act as a single point of contact in their case. This seems to be particularly relevant for victims bereaved by homicide abroad who are currently left floundering to make complicated arrangements and deal with authorities abroad themselves. This report makes a

number of recommendations to improve the professionalisation of support services received by victims of homicide abroad.

In summary, this report finds the four key principles of what works in supporting victims coping and recovery: information and communication; procedural justice; multi-agency working and professionalised services are not being met for victims of homicide abroad. The report makes recommendations to address these deficiencies in support and entitlements for these victims with the aim of creating as a minimum, parity with support experienced by victims of the same crime at home in the UK.

Case Studies

Methodology

This report draws on the experience of 12 families whose loved one was killed abroad. Some of the cases do not have a conviction for murder, some may not have had a full and proper criminal investigation abroad, but all the victims died under suspicious circumstances and their families have had to engage with the complexities of the criminal justice system both at home and abroad in the aftermath of their bereavement.

In-depth qualitative interviews were carried out with the families of victims asking them about their experience of interacting with UK based authorities and the support they received following the death of their relative abroad. The interviews covered how families were informed about the death, victims' contact with the UK police and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, support for repatriation of the deceased's body, support from UK commissioned charities, experience of post-mortem and inquests, availability of interpretation and transcription services, financial support, support from commercial organisations such as insurance companies and banks as well as exploring what support bereaved families would have expected to receive from UK authorities at this difficult time. A list of case studies including the year, country and brief details, are listed in Appendix 1. Some names of the participants have been changed to protect their anonymity, and some victims have asked that their real names be used for this report.

Whilst these case studies cannot be said to be a nationally representative sample of families of victims of homicide abroad, they do illustrate some of the issues these families face at such a difficult time. A thematic analysis of the case studies is presented in Appendix 1.

Key themes from the case studies

Analysis of the interview transcripts identified key recurring themes in families' experience of their interaction with UK based authorities and the support they received following the death of their relative abroad.

Some victims' families reported a lack of sensitivity and poor procedures for being informed about their loved one's death. This ranged from not being told at all about the death by UK authorities to being told about it by the police in the victims' hallway before the victim could even properly invite the police officer in, and writing down the phone number for the FCO on a scrap of paper.

Victims' families had mixed feelings about the support they received from the FCO both at home and abroad with many families feeling as though they were left to flounder, getting passed from one place to another when trying to make complicated arrangements abroad at a time of trauma and distress. Some victims' families felt there was a lack of information and communication from the FCO and they were constantly chasing the FCO to get updates on their case.

Many victims' families reported problems with having key documents translated and many commented on the lack of provision of interpreters. This has implications for families who want to know what has happened to their loved one. Some victims' families had to pay expensive translation costs themselves. Similarly, some families had to pay costly legal fees, hiring solicitors in the country the death occurred in. Families reported being given a list of local translators and lawyers by the FCO. These contacts are not vetted by the FCO and the FCO will not make recommendations or endorse any particular services. Some victims' families reported being given details of lawyers who they subsequently found to be unqualified in this area of law and one family was defrauded by such a lawyer. Other victims' families report poor translation services which have misinterpreted key documents for an inquest. Some victims' families reported looking to other sources of support for translation and interpretation such as international media contacts who in turn benefitted from access to victims to gain a story for the UK media.

Many victims' families reported problems with arranging the repatriation of their loved one's body to the UK. Such problems included a lack of up-to-date information about processes by the FCO and being persuaded by the FCO to have their loved one cremated abroad due to the cost of repatriation. Victims identified banks and insurance companies as being the most helpful in supporting them with repatriation. Dedicated bereavement teams in banks and insurance companies were reported to be supportive and sympathetic to victims.

Some of the victims' families spoke positively about the support they received from the Homicide Service provided by Victim Support. However, some reported not meeting the eligibility criteria because the death of their loved one was not being investigated in the country in which they died, this, despite there being obvious suspicious circumstances of their death. Victims' families spoke highly of the support they received from other charities such as Murdered Abroad.

Victims' families reported a mixed experience of support from the UK police. Some talked positively about the support they received from British police and some said they found the police to be obstructive in their case. Some victims' families could not understand why they had not been allocated a Family Liaison Officer and felt this reflected poorly on the police's consideration of their case. Some families were led to believe the police could provide more support than they could, for example being told that British police officers could travel abroad with the family only to be told later that there is no budget for this level of support.

All of the families we spoke to identified the high financial cost involved for families bereaved by homicide abroad as a particular strain. Costs include repatriation, legal and translation costs, travel abroad for lengthy trials and loss of earnings at home. Victims of homicide abroad are not eligible for compensation in the UK under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. The one victim we spoke to who was eligible for compensation under the parallel scheme for victims of terrorism had her application put on hold pending the outcome of a civil case. For many victims' families the financial worries have caused significant stress with families explaining how financial worries compound their grief. One victim's daughter even lost her home because of the costs incurred following her mother's murder.

Conclusions

One of the first observations that struck us when talking to those who contributed to this review is that the only people who have end to end experience of the whole process for victims of murder abroad are the bereaved families of the victims. Whilst key agencies might meet in wider forums or at bilateral meetings, there is no opportunity for agencies to meet to discuss the end to end process and seek the views of victims and their representatives. There were some good examples of cross-working, such as the joint training seminar delivered by police and the Murder and Manslaughter Team to consular staff. We also found that agencies, whilst speaking about other agencies in favourable terms, were able to offer interesting insights on how support to victims might be improved. One example is representatives from the Homicide Service reflecting on the positive impact on families when they met their FCO caseworker face to face.

The charity, Murdered Abroad, told us: *“We believe there should be a dedicated agency responsible for Homicides Abroad. Currently, no one agency is responsible, nor accountable. There is a lack of information, advice and explanations and a lack of openness and transparency about what is available.”* We understand and share this concern, but we struggled to see which agency this might be. We wondered if there might be unintended consequences for this approach, that if one agency was responsible, others would feel able to retreat, thereby inadvertently causing a negative impact on the support received by victims.

However, there is certainly more that can be done to achieve better collaboration between the agencies concerned. We see real value in setting up a dedicated forum for homicide abroad cases, where all key agencies, the FCO, MoJ, Homicide Service, NPCC, meet with representatives from victim organisations and possibly representatives from the insurance industry to review the process and consider how it might be improved. These meetings need not take place more than twice a year and could be hosted by MoJ and the FCO. One of the responsibilities of this forum might be to monitor and evaluate how effective the MoU is and where it might be amended and improved.

When we met with representatives from the Homicide Service, they observed the families they were supporting following murder abroad often experienced a *“sense of helplessness”* and *“lack of control over what was happening to them”*. This was much more so than other bereaved victims. This struck a chord with us. The charity Murdered Abroad spoke of the need for

“...families bereaved by a homicide abroad [should] be treated as ‘victims’ by all the statutory agencies. They should not be seen as a nuisance and fobbed off because no one understands what should happen”.

Again, this message articulates that this group of victims sit outside the usual framework of support for victims of homicide. Yet they need the same help and support as if the crime happened in the UK.

We recognise there are many factors that are responsible for creating this impression, some of which we can do little about, such as the difficulties in dealing with foreign criminal justice systems, and the barriers created by language. However, some of this sense of helplessness might also be attributed to their perhaps inadvertent treatment by agencies in the UK. This was an issue we were keen to address.

One example is that most of the support received by these victims sat outside of the Victims' Code of Practice, a document that provides the foundation of support for all other victims of crime. We recognise that simply inserting these victims into the Code would not be a solution to all their problems, as many victims of crimes committed within the UK will sadly testify. However, there appears to be no logical reason why they should be excluded. At least entitlements listed within the Code provide a statutory basis for expecting they will be complied with.

A key agency in supporting these victims is the FCO and we believe that as such, it should be included as an organisation required to provide services under the Code. Furthermore, the Code should make reference to this group of victims and also include key entitlements, such as the right to receive key information from the FCO, including consular support.

In 2012 the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme was amended by primary legislation to set up a parallel scheme for bereaved victims of terror attacks abroad. However, victims of other forms of homicide cannot claim compensation, despite the fact that emotional needs are identical and the actual costs of dealing with death abroad can be significant. It is not clear why there should be a distinction between homicide as a result of a terror attack and homicide by any other means. Nor do we accept that amending the terms of the scheme creates a precedent. The precedent was created in 2012.

We accept there are reciprocal arrangements within the EU, although with Brexit, the continuation of reciprocity cannot be guaranteed. Many schemes in other EU states are not as generous as the UK scheme and some are means tested. Furthermore, these reciprocal arrangements do not extend to countries outside of the EU.

It should also be remembered that the money is paid to the bereaved family, many of whom may never have stepped foot into the country where the death occurred. These families will already be struggling with an unfamiliar criminal justice system, without having to deal with an unfamiliar compensation system.

We therefore recommend that all bereaved victims of homicide abroad should be eligible to claim the UK criminal injuries compensation scheme. Furthermore, there needs to be recognition of the potentially significant additional costs for this group of families and this should in part be reflected in the awards made to them.

In the case studies, translation costs have been a major obstacle for bereaved families as they struggle to find out how their loved one died and how to secure justice. There are often practical difficulties in finding suitable translation facilities. We recognise that some victims may receive "means tested" assistance through the Homicide Service. Other victims refer to their struggle to access interpreters and translation as an example of feeling abandoned by the state.

It is astonishing that despite the fact that much public information within the UK is available in a suitable form for residents for whom English is not their first language, this group of victims, often struggling with grief and trauma, have no automatic entitlement for help with the costs of translation into English. The charity Murdered Abroad makes reference to a newspaper article estimating that UK authorities spend in excess of £80 million a year on translation costs. It is a matter of public record that HM Courts and Tribunals Service make around 38,000 translation/interpreter services requests every quarter. Yet cases of bereaved victims of homicide abroad are around 60-90 a year.

Before any bereaved victim can start the process of recovery, they need to understand how their loved one died and also to have some sense that they have had procedural justice. This applies to these families as much as any other bereaved victim.

We know that some victims want all documentation relating to an investigation and trial to be translated and this might run into thousands of pages. We accept that this will not always be practicable or affordable. However, we have concluded that there will be a set of core documents victims' families will need if they are to understand what has happened to their loved one. These might include a post-mortem report and initial police investigation reports and relevant witness statements. Equally, there may be key documents in any trial, such as the charges, judges' sentencing remarks, details of sentences, which will help them gain some sense of justice. We believe it should fall to the agencies supporting the victims to arrange for these documents to be made available and translated into the first language of the bereaved family. This should be undertaken free of charge to the family. We assume this role might best be undertaken by the FCO.

We have received conflicting accounts of what proportion of victims have comprehensive travel insurance at the time of death. The case studies show that victims who were able to claim through their banks or insurance companies, have generally found them to be supportive, empathetic and efficient. However, there will be some victims who do not have insurance cover and as a result, their families can face substantial bills, for instance for repatriating the body to the UK. The Homicide Service has been able to assist in some cases or have occasionally found airlines who have agreed to repatriate the body free of charge. There have been stories of victims having to crowd fund or seek support from family and friends. Some have been compelled on grounds of cost to have their loved one cremated or buried in the country where the death occurred.

We agree with the FCO that we all have responsibilities to make appropriate travel insurance arrangements and anything the government can do to highlight the risks of travelling without insurance is to be welcomed.

The repatriation of the body can assist the family in their recovery. For example, there can only be a UK inquest into how the death occurred if the body is repatriated. For some families, this inquest can bring enormous comfort, as they may have greater confidence in the reliability of a UK court. As one victim said, when in contact with the charity Murdered Abroad: *"As painful as it was to hear that there were marks on Joanna's wrists where she had been tied up and strangulation marks on her neck, I needed to be sure of the facts. I was hearing it in English, in a British Court and I believed that what I was hearing was the truth about what had happened to Joanna. You can handle the facts, it's the unknown which is most painful"*.

The charity, Murdered Abroad, are keen to stress the importance of explaining to all bereaved families at a very early stage that *"no body means no inquest"*. They also highlighted that international undertakers are a very good source of information for families planning the repatriation of their loved one.

The first-hand accounts in the case studies in this report highlight the importance of returning the body. We concluded that no family should be forced to have the body of their loved one buried or cremated abroad solely on grounds of cost.

There should always be an option of last resort that the government will return the body to the UK and seek to recoup the costs from the family at a later date.

The Murder and Manslaughter Team in the FCO was created in 2015 and has made great strides in developing the service it provides to victims. Yet feedback is that victims are frustrated when they hear nothing for periods of time and any face-to-face meetings are limited to victims attending the FCO – sometimes at their own expense and travelling from all parts of the UK. The victims who are referred to the team are invariably traumatised and have a high level of need. This might mean that they struggle to absorb complex information and face-to-face contact might facilitate their understanding of what to expect going forward.

Equally, the funding given to the Homicide Service has remained the same for several years, and the Homicide Service makes reference to the difficult decisions it has to make in determining the level of support to be given to families.

We would therefore recommend the FCO review the resources allocated to this area of work, both in terms of the capacity of the Murder and Manslaughter Team to undertake more face-to-face engagement with victims and to provide team members with the training and support required of any team of staff dealing with people suffering with trauma and who have complex needs. This review also needs to look at the fund given to the Homicide Service to assist victims with their expenses.

Many victims we have spoken to have complained about the inadequacy of the lists of translators and local lawyers. This can cause added distress and expense for victims. We recommend all consulates be required to review their lists and quality assure those on the list.

Some of the families we spoke to in our case studies referred to the manner in which they were informed of their death by UK police. Some were dealt with sensitively, others not. The news will often be devastating and the manner in which it is done will leave a lasting impression in the minds of the recipients of the news. There are reports of victims being abruptly notified of the death of a loved one but not being given any written information other than an FCO telephone number.

The charity Murdered Abroad recommends that only police officers trained to carry out death notifications should be entrusted to this difficult task and we agree. There may be times when there is no officer available who has been trained, but this should be the exception. Furthermore, the FCO should provide the police with whatever information they have in their possession, in order to assist the police in explaining what might have happened. The information might not be comprehensive but it should always be made available.

The other issue is that victims need to be provided with information on what happens next and who to contact. We recommend police officers tasked with delivering this news should be made aware of a document they can download and deliver to the victim either at the initial notification or within 24 hours.

Once the initial death notification has occurred, the family will invariably need to access services that provide them with practical and emotional support. This needs to happen without delay.

The Homicide Service and the FCO can be presented with a dilemma when a death has occurred in suspicious circumstances but has not been officially classified as homicide. This can leave bereaved victims in a limbo, in need of support, whilst those responsible for delivering it are trying to get clarity as to their entitlement. The Homicide Service is reluctant to initiate contact until clarification has been sought and this can lead to a significant delay. In certain cases, a suspicious death might never be investigated within the foreign jurisdiction.

Whether a death is classified as a homicide or as having occurred under suspicious circumstances, the emotional and practical needs of the bereaved families are exactly the same, other than one is entitled to receive the support of the Homicide Service and the other isn't. In these cases, there needs to be a fall-back referral mechanism whereby a decision is taken on whether to treat the bereaved as victims of homicide. We believe that in such cases, the Chief Constable should be presented with the available facts and asked to rule on whether such a case, were it to happen in the UK, be investigated as a suspected homicide. If the Chief Constable's decision is that it is likely that it would, the case should automatically be referred to the Homicide Service to provide support

The Homicide Service can provide discretionary support for victims, helping them with travel costs, translation costs, legal costs etc. they describe the means of calculating who should receive this assistance as more *"an art than a science"*. Victims groups tell us that victims struggle to understand how decisions are taken. Some feel it is down to their individual caseworker. We understand the need for flexibility, but there needs to be accountability and transparency so that those benefiting from an exercise of discretion and those who do not have some means of understanding how decisions are being made. After all, this is not an act of charitable benevolence, but the distribution of public funds. We recommend that the Homicide Service and MoJ agree on how information might be given to victims that helps them understand the basis for decision-making.

We understand that many victims of murder abroad want a SIO and/or FLO. The charity Murdered Abroad highlights the benefits for victims, receiving information about the investigation and the support and guidance of a professionally trained liaison officer. The police identify that in cases where there is no investigation role for the police, there is often no need for a senior investigating officer to be allocated and, as such, no need for an FLO. The FCO refer to the differing practices between police forces, as the decision whether to allocate an SIO and FLO ultimately rests with the Chief Constable. Yet the police keep no central record on these decisions and therefore, no one can be sure what proportion of victims receive the support of an FLO and the extent to which practice varies.

The NPCC is re-drafting its guidance on this matter with a stronger presumption in favour of cases usually being allocated an SIO and FLO. The charity Murdered Abroad welcome this development and so do we, as we recognise the value victims attach to this support. It is not known when the new guidance will come into effect.

It would be useful to know when Chief Constables are allocating SIOs and FLOs and when they are not. This data will flag up where different practices exist and will also give the police some indication of what proportion of these families are receiving their support. We recognise that additional data capture is never welcome, but the numbers are small. Arguably, this data capture might be easier for an agency other than the police to capture.

Even before we started researching for this report, we were aware that a high proportion of the cases attracted significant media attention and this has been confirmed by those supporting these victims' families. There needs to be clarity on who is responsible for assisting these families, who are struggling with grief and trauma and then find they face having to deal with media enquiries. The current MoU makes reference to this, but we understand it has been omitted in the re-draft. The charity, Murdered Abroad, would prefer this support to be provided by the police as *"they are the experts"*. We felt unable to comment on who should lead, but the preference of those charities supporting victims should be carefully considered before a final decision is made.

The homicide might be committed in a different country, but in a number of cases the perpetrator is a British national. Although they will be tried in the jurisdiction in which the death occurred, once imprisoned following conviction, they can apply to be repatriated to a UK prison under the Prisoner Repatriation Scheme. Yet at present, there are no written arrangements for alerting the victims' families and inviting them to join the Victim Contact Scheme. This gap in notification procedures can lead to victims only finding out about the repatriation once the offender has been released. This issue needs to be addressed.

References

- Casey, C.B. (2011) *Review into the Needs of Families Bereaved by Homicide*. Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses. Available at: <https://aafda.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/review-needs-of-families-bereaved-by-homicide.pdf> [pdf] [Accessed August 2019]
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office Murder (2012) *Manslaughter and Infanticide of British Nationals Abroad: Memorandum of understanding between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Coroners' Society of England and Wales* Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/141958/mou-fco-acpo-coroners.pdf [pdf] [Accessed August 2019]
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2017) *Foreign and Commonwealth Office Consular support for those bereaved through murder or manslaughter abroad*. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547012/Murder_Manslaughter_WEB100816.pdf [pdf] [Accessed July 2019]
- Ministry of Justice (2012) *Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme* Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/808343/criminal-injuries-compensation-scheme-2012.pdf [pdf] [Accessed August 2019]
- Wedlock, E. & Tapley, J. (2016) *What works in supporting victims of crime: A rapid evidence assessment*. Office of the Victims' Commissioner. Available at: <https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/victimscmm-prod-storage-clhgqum05k1/uploads/2014/10/What-works-in-supporting-victims-of-crime.pdf> [pdf] [Accessed August 2019]

Appendix 1: Victim Case Studies: Key Themes

How victims are informed of the death

If a British citizen is a victim of homicide abroad, the FCO aim to have a local police officer inform the next of kin directly, face to face if possible and before the story has appeared in the media. In the guidance for those bereaved by murder and manslaughter abroad, the FCO state that due to the swift coverage of 24-hour news and social media, they may deliver this news by telephone instead of face to face in a bid to inform the family before they hear it from other sources.

Whilst some of the victims that we spoke to were informed by the police, many were not and found out about the death of their loved ones from friends or acquaintances abroad or from the media.

The manner in which a victim of homicide is informed by the police is as important as not learning the news from the media or acquaintances. This is a time when the utmost empathy and sensitivity should be shown by police officers. Some victims told us the police informed them of their loved one's death in the hallway before they could even invite the police properly into their home to sit down. This lacks the sensitivity required for telling victims such devastating news.

Amanda found out about Steve's death when two local police officers arrived at her door. While talking to Amanda on her doorstep, they began to tell her that a body had been found in India and Steve's passport had been found nearby. At first Amanda didn't realise they were telling her that it was Steve's body that had been found. She asked the police officers to come into the house to explain. As they were walking into the hallway they told Amanda she would need to identify the body. It was only then she realised they were talking about Steve. The police officer jotted down a number for Amanda to call the FCO. That was the last contact she had with the British Police.

Case study 3

At home in the UK, Claire received a knock on the door from two local PCSOs. They asked if James was her son and told her that James had been killed on a quad bike in Greece. They wrote down the number of the FCO on a newspaper and promptly left. The whole conversation took place in the hallway before Claire even had a chance to invite them in to sit down.

Case study 12

One victim that we spoke to found out about her daughter's murder from friends who had seen it on the news. When they found out, they tried to contact the FCO to confirm the news, the family were unable to contact the FCO and were never officially told by the British authorities that their daughter had been murdered.

Sue and her husband were on holiday in Spain at the time with friends. The friends found out about Sarah's murder when they were watching Sky News, they tried to call the FCO to confirm what had happened. The friends told Sue they thought Sarah had been murdered. Another member of the family in the UK called the FCO to confirm Sarah's death which they did at that time, but nobody ever contacted Sue to tell her directly about her daughter's death. Sue's son was at home in the UK and found out about his sister's murder while listening to the radio. He went to the local

police station to find out if it was true, but the police didn't know anything about Sarah's death. Sue and her husband flew straight back from Spain. By the next morning the case of Sarah's murder was on the tv news in the UK. Nobody contacted the family officially to inform them of exactly what happened and Sue had to watch the tv to find out the horrific circumstances of her murder.

Case study 10

Another victim was informed about her daughter's death by acquaintances who found out from other friends abroad, described how she also was never officially informed about her daughter's death.

Emmy didn't hear anything from the UK police and had to follow up with the American police herself to confirm what she had been told. Sometime later, when Emmy called the Home Office to ask why she had not been informed by the authorities about her daughter's death, the officials response was 'well, you are informing us now.'

Case study 8

Some victims are informed of the homicide by authorities abroad. Language barriers and differences in procedures in other countries can mean this news may be imparted with seemingly little thought or empathy.

Ludmila found out about her daughter's death through a phone call from the authorities in Azerbaijan. In the first phone call Ludmila was told that Elizabeth was in hospital but she was going to be alright, no further details were given. Ludmila was concerned and tried to contact her daughter herself but couldn't get hold of her. Twenty minutes later she answered the phone to the same caller who told her very abruptly that Elizabeth was dead and asked Ludmilla to come and pick up the body. Ludmila later found out that the caller was from the criminal investigations bureau in Baku but it wasn't clear at the time.

Case study 4

In contrast, another victim told us that the police in America were very considerate and offered to discuss the case over the phone at any time convenient to the victims' family in the UK, regardless that the time difference would mean that it would be in the middle of the night for the police officer.

Gordon was given a contact number for the police sergeant in charge who waited up for his call due to the time differences. The family found the American police and the district attorney very helpful and approachable. They provided information and answered questions at any time regardless of the time difference.

Case study 6

Support from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

In their guidance for those bereaved through murder or manslaughter abroad, the FCO state they can provide the following assistance⁵:

- Provide assistance by assigning a dedicated consular officer who is familiar with providing support and assistance in such cases.
- Provide lists of local lawyers, interpreters, translators and local and international funeral directors and, where available, details of victim support groups.
- Refer victims to Victim Support Scotland or Victim Support's Homicide Service in England and Wales.
- Give victims practical information on arranging repatriation, registering the death and obtaining a local death certificate.
- Seek updates on victims' behalf on the investigation or trial.
- Offer general information about the local police and legal system, including any legal aid or compensation that is available.
- Support victims if they decide to visit the country where the death occurred, including helping to arrange (and sometimes attending with you) an initial round of meetings with the authorities.
- Provide advice on transferring money.
- Make or suggest appropriate representations to the local authorities if there are concerns that the investigation or judicial process is not being carried out in line with local laws or procedures.
- Accompany victims to the first and last day of a trial and at the verdict.
- Liaise with the Coroner.
- Provide advice on handling media attention.

Some victims told us about these types of support that they have received. For example

When Andrew first went to Thailand, he met with embassy officials, the ambassador and senior police. Andrew was briefed on aspects of Thai law and culture.

Case study 9

Other victims told us that FCO representatives attended court cases with the families, though the FCO could not provide any translation support to help the families know what was going on in court.

The trial was conducted in Greek. James, the British man accused of the homicide, had an interpreter by his side for the whole trial, but the FCO said they could not provide interpretation or translation assistance to Charlotte in case they made a mistake and the family could sue them.

Case study 7

We heard from victims who felt that the FCO did not give them the advice and support they needed and felt as though they were left to flounder on their own.

⁵ Foreign and Commonwealth Office Consular support for those bereaved through murder or manslaughter abroad. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/547012/Murder_Manslaughter_WEB100816.pdf Accessed July 2019

Trudy would have expected more support from the FCO in terms of communication and information, help with travel arrangements and help from the British police to pursue an investigation into her husband's death. Instead she feels as though she and her family have been left to fend for themselves by the authorities both in terms of the initial arrangements and through the subsequent emotional and financial impact that Russell's death has had on Trudy and her family. 'Russell was a British Citizen, an RAF veteran who won medals but regardless of that you would expect the country he loved and worked for would have supported him and his family at a time when they needed it most. They have turned their backs on us, that's how I feel. I am very much going this alone emotionally and financially.'

Case study 1

Amanda feels there should be more support available from the FCO when a loved one is murdered abroad. 'You would expect them to hold your hand a bit because it is such a bad process to go through and you are in shock, in mourning. There should have been some help there. There should be a process, steps that you can follow. You should have a direct line to contact a FLO or investigating officer.'

Case study 3

In some cases, victims were actively told that the FCO would not provide them with any help or support.

When Sue first went to meet a representative from the FCO, she was told as she walked in the door there was nothing they could do to help her. She found this very hard to deal with.

Case study 10

The FCO official said they couldn't do anything or get involved. Catherine and Gordon were disappointed that it took so long for the FCO to contact them and disappointed with the lack of support. 'My elder son got a call from the press straight away... if the press can get hold of him that quickly why can't the UK social justice system?'

Case study 6

One victim told us that the FCO had said if a British citizen was charged with their daughter's murder they would have to advocate on their behalf above the interests of the victim's family because he could face the death penalty.

At one point, the British police identified a British suspect. The FCO told Sue that if the suspect was arrested they would have to support him rather than Sue and her family. Thailand has the death penalty for murder and the FCO said they would need to advocate for the suspect as a British citizen. 'Nothing came of it in the end but it was a shock to realise that if it came to it they would support him rather than us.'

Case study 10

One victim described how helpful the authorities in other jurisdictions can be compared with the British authorities:

Charlotte and Ella moved abroad. Robert was concerned that the perpetrator James might follow them. He contacted the FCO to ask if the family could be informed if James attempted to travel to that country and was told they could not do this

because it would be in breach of James's civil liberties. Robert contacted the authorities in the country that Charlotte moved to. They were much more helpful and could understand the family's concerns. James was put on a register and is not allowed to enter that country.

Case study 7

Some victims felt that they had to constantly chase the FCO for updates in their case.

Sue found that the FCO didn't give any support or guidance unless she proactively called them. 'You put yourself in their hands thinking that they will sort things out, that they will keep you up to date with what is happening but there was very little communication from the Foreign Office.' I expected the Foreign Office to do more to tell us what the procedure would be with repatriation.' Sue found that several weeks would go by without hearing from the FCO. She got more information herself from the internet than she did from official sources.

Case study 10

The family has contacted the FCO in the UK seeking updates on the investigation. The FCO said they contacted the British Embassy in Brussels to remind them that the case is still ongoing, but the family have still not heard anything further about the investigation. 'They have forgotten him. If somebody had told me it had happened to somebody else I would expect the local police force to be there.'

Case study 5

One victim felt at the time of the criminal investigation that the FCO was not communicating with themselves or the police and authorities abroad. After requesting his files from the FCO, he found out that they had in fact been communicating with authorities abroad but hadn't informed the family of these discussions. This left the victim feeling as though the FCO was going behind the family's back.

Sometime after the trial was completed and Andrew and his family had returned home, they decided to put in a freedom of information request to the FCO. On reading the case notes he found that embassy officials were talking to the police in Thailand, but he wasn't aware of it at the time. He had a feeling that he and his family had been managed rather than kept informed.

Case study 9

Another victim felt that the communication with the FCO was not only unhelpful, but also lacked empathy.

Amanda felt under a great deal of pressure and thought the FCO did not communicate with her with the empathy and compassion she deserved. 'I couldn't cope with it; the pressure was ridiculous. I don't know how they think they can deal with people in grief like that. That was one of the worst bits, the way they communicated was appalling... After about 2 days the family said just agree to what they say, just do it because they are phoning us as well and they couldn't handle it either.'

Case study 3

Despite the FCO guidance stating they can provide advice on media handling, victims who did not receive any such support found the press to be very intrusive and did not get any help to know how to handle this.

Lisa and her family found the press intrusion difficult to handle and had no support to deal with that other than Lisa's psychiatrist in France who asked reporters to stop filming her and her family at the trial.

Case study 2

Amanda found dealing with the press extremely stressful and had no help in managing that interaction. She is concerned that her children will be able to see the terrible details that were written about their father's death as they get older.

Case study 3

Repatriation

The repatriation of victims' bodies to the UK can be particularly difficult and stressful for families to arrange, especially when faced with unfamiliar processes and language barriers. The FCO guidance for those bereaved abroad states that they will provide practical information about processes and support to register the death abroad. In practice, although they expected the FCO to help them make these arrangements, the victims we spoke to received little help from the FCO to repatriate their loved ones remains.

Looking back, Amanda says she would have expected help from the FCO to repatriate Steve's body. She thought they would help with advice and legal representation. 'I've told people since and they say, didn't the Foreign Office pay for his body to come back? And I say no. That's the illusion a lot of people are under. If you are in trouble abroad the Foreign Office will come in and make sure you are alright but they don't do that. That's a bit of a shocker for people.'

Case study 3

The FCO returned the call the next day to ask for Sarah's travel insurance details. The FCO did not organise the repatriation of Sarah's body, the arrangements were made by a family friend. Sue would have expected help with the repatriation or at least be told the procedures, but the family friend organised everything herself.

Case study 10

One victim found that he couldn't get a clear answer from the FCO about how to repatriate his son's body from the USA. To add to the stress of this lack of information and support, he found he had to repeat the story of his son's death each time he called the FCO.

Gordon rang the British consulate to try and work out how to repatriate George's body, but gave up when he couldn't get any clear answers. 'You would get a different person each time. They were just looking at notes on the screen. We would have to repeat the story every time, going through it again and again. It seems like the staff don't have the skills to deal with this. They are just used to dealing with admin. They were as much at a loss as to what to do as we were.'

Case study 6

One victim described how she had been given a leaflet by the British Consulate explaining how to go about the process of repatriation. After following the guidance, she later found that the advice was outdated and incorrect, causing her further stress as she tried to make the

arrangements to return her daughter's body to the UK. The FCO stepped in and supported her in making the arrangements, but only after they had sent her to the wrong addresses and she had made a complaint to more senior staff at the consulate.

Ludmila set about trying to make the arrangements to repatriate her daughter's body based on the information given to them by the British Embassy in Baku. They were passed from one place to another and told they were not following the necessary procedures. When Ludmila went back to the British Embassy, the officials apologised and said the information in the leaflet was incorrect and had not been updated since 2012 because the Embassy was short staffed. A British official and a driver then accompanied Ludmila to make the repatriation arrangements.

Case study 4

Repatriation can be a costly and unexpected expense for bereaved victims of homicide abroad. Some victims have found that insurance companies and banks have been very supportive in helping victims make arrangements and paying for them.

When Trudy returned home she began procedures to repatriate Russell's body. Russell had travel insurance through his bank account. Trudy rang the bank and they were very helpful and compassionate. The bank's repatriation team took care of the arrangements.

Case study 1

For another victim, the insurance company agreed to pay for the repatriation. However, the culture in the country that the victim died in was such that payment was required up front. The victim's mother found it difficult to persuade the British insurance company to adapt to the other country's way of doing things.

The repatriation costs were covered by Elizabeth's travel insurance. It took Ludmila a week to convince them to do so. She found an agent to arrange the flight but they refused to do so without payment up front. It took another week for Ludmila to convince the insurance company to pay in advance. Elizabeth's body was repatriated along with her passport and other certificates. These official documents were missing when Elizabeth's body arrived in the UK.

Case study 4

Victims without sufficient insurance can struggle to meet the costs of repatriation. They may get into debt to repatriate their loved one, or have to put the costs onto credit cards. One victim told us that she relied on friends and charity to bring her son's body back from Greece.

Claire did not receive any support to repatriate her son's body. A friend of the family raised the money for repatriation by running a sponsored marathon.

Case study 12

Another victim felt under pressure to have her partner's body cremated abroad. This was partly because of her own worries about the cost of repatriation, but this was reinforced by the FCO advice about how much repatriation would cost and she felt under pressure from the FCO not to repatriate the body. This has implications on processes in the UK as cremation abroad leaves no opportunity for a possible second Home Office post mortem nor a coronial investigation and mandatory coroner's inquest.

Amanda felt under pressure by the FCO to decide what should be done with Steve's body. The FCO rang her frequently asking her to decide. She was told it would be very expensive to repatriate Steve's body and she would be required to pay a daily rate to the Indian hospital for mortuary services. 'It felt like I was being put under immense pressure to get rid of the body. They were saying stuff like, we can't bring the body back it's ruined... if you do it's going to cost you loads and loads of money, at least £10,000 they told us. The best thing for you to do is get the body cremated over there as soon as possible because you will have to start paying £50 a day to keep his body refrigerated in the hospital in Delhi.'

Case study 12

Some victims find that the funeral undertaking and associated repatriation procedures abroad are a stark contrast with undertaking procedures they would expect at home. This can add greatly to victims' distress and some victims felt they were not supported by the FCO in dealing with these authorities.

Trudy asked to see Russell's body, but was told this wasn't common practice because Matt, a friend who was travelling with Russell, had already identified the body. Trudy was grieving and felt she needed to see Russell to assure herself of what had happened. She is a nurse and is used to seeing deceased bodies but was shocked at the state of Russell's body when she saw it which had not been prepared for viewing in the way it would have been in the UK.

Case study 1

When Ludmila was finally allowed to see her daughter, the body, wrapped tightly in tape was brought out of the hospital and placed on the steps. Ludmila was upset at the lack of dignity and respect shown to her daughter's remains. Ludmila had been told that the mortuary fees had been paid, but when the hospital attendants brought out the body they refused to release her until Ludmila paid. Unable to use her credit cards in Azerbaijan, Ludmila handed over her purse and they took all the money she had, saying it would just have to be enough.

Case study 4

In contrast, a sensitively handled repatriation with the support of British officials can be a comfort to bereaved families. For example, a victim of terrorism abroad described her feelings about her husband's repatriation being handled sensitively by the British air force.

Cheryl and the other victims received help to repatriate their loved one's bodies. They were told it would take 10-14 days but in fact it was arranged more quickly. She felt that the British air force brought John's body back in a respectful and dignified manner and that by doing so 'he was given the respect that was taken away from them in the way they were killed.'

Case study 11

In contrast, a spokesperson from the charity Murdered abroad reported that:

"Families of non-terror related homicide victims abroad get extremely upset about the UK's support and press coverage of victims of terrorism - British air force planes, flag draped coffins, memorials erected etc. The grief felt by the family of an individual death is no different to the grief felt by each of the families bereaved by an act of

terrorism. The public's assumption is that following a homicide 'all' families are afforded such compassionate treatment."

Spokesperson Murdered Abroad

Translation and interpretation

In their guide to consular support for those bereaved by murder and manslaughter abroad, the FCO state that they can provide a list of locally available translation and interpretation services. The FCO does not provide interpretation services in court, or provide official translations of documents. In particular, it states:

In some cases staff may be able to give you a summary of what a document says but our staff cannot interpret for you in court. You should use an interpreter or translator to provide accurate translations of documents⁶

The victims that we spoke to reported being provided with lists of interpretation and translation services and being told the FCO could not act as interpreters for them in court or translating documents. This is in accordance with the guidance, but victims were surprised by this policy and would have expected more help from the FCO with such services.

One victim was told that the FCO would not provide interpretation services in case they got the interpretation wrong and the victim sued them. She found this particularly distressing because the perpetrator, also a British citizen, was provided with an interpreter throughout the court trial.

The trial was conducted in Greek. James the perpetrator had an interpreter by his side for the whole trial, but the FCO said they could not provide interpretation or translation assistance to Charlotte in case they made a mistake and the family could sue them.

Case study 7

One victim who wanted a summary of what happened in court, was not supported by the FCO in obtaining this. Instead she had to make copies of the documents for herself and pay for expensive translation costs before she could know what had actually happened to her son.

After the trial, Claire wanted a copy of the documentation. She had to pay €50 to the court, then was instructed to leave behind her passport as security in order to access the documents. She took the original documents to the local shop and paid to use a photo copier to copy the official documents herself. Claire then paid a solicitor to translate the documents so that she could finally know what had happened to James in his last moments.

Case study 12

Another victim who couldn't afford costly translation or solicitor's fees turned to the internet to try and translate official documents herself.

⁶ Foreign Office (2016) Consular Support for those Bereaved by Murder and Manslaughter Abroad. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-british-people-abroad-murder-and-manslaughter/consular-support-for-those-bereaved-through-murder-or-manslaughter-abroad-web-version> Accessed 12 July 2019

She contacted the British Embassy for help with translations. They were slow to reply if they replied at all. She didn't want to complain because she felt vulnerable and didn't want to upset anyone in case she could get them to help her in the future. Documents such as psychiatrist reports and court documents were sent to Lisa in French and she turned to internet translation apps to try and translate them herself.

Case study 2

Some victims found that when they did receive translated documents, the translation was inaccurate. This could have a negative impact on the outcome of an inquest in the UK.

She decided to hire a lawyer in Italy which she paid for herself to pursue an investigation into her husband's death. The lawyer found inconsistencies in the translated documentation. For example, the translation said the security guard had attempted to resuscitate Russell, the lawyer said the Italian documents did not mention this.

Case study 1

When Ludmila read the translated documents, she could see that they made no sense. She had the documents translated herself but an official at the coroner's office was not happy that Ludmila had taken this action and an angry exchange of phone calls ensued.

Case study 4

The lack of interpretation services provided by the FCO, sometimes forces victims to seek help in interpretation from anywhere they can get it. This includes turning to the media, or even to parties who may be involved in the investigation. When families don't know what is going on and they are not getting help from official sources, they will turn to anyone in the local area that will help them.

There was no official interpretation available, the manager of the hostel that Russell was staying at when he was killed in its grounds, acted as an unofficial interpreter for Trudy.

Case study 1

The family got to know the Greek correspondent for the BBC, and a BBC staff member helped them at the trial by describing what was going on in the court room. 'It is supposed to be victim orientated now, yet the prisoner gets free translation and interpretation 24 /7 and the victims' family gets nothing.'

Case study 7

Andrew got the most help from the British journalists he met in Thailand. He was aware that the journalists had their own reasons for supporting him, to have exclusive access to the story, but with no support from the embassy he felt it was his best chance of getting any help in Thailand. When the embassy refused to supply translation services for the trial, the journalists stepped in and supplied a translator. They acted as local guides for Andrew in Thailand, driving him from place to place. 'The embassy was not happy that I was with the journalists but they made a big difference, much more helpful than the embassy. They had an angle but were sympathetic. I read their articles and could veto certain aspects.'

Case study 9

Legal representation

The FCO guidance for those bereaved through murder or manslaughter abroad recommends that victims appoint a local lawyer to seek professional legal advice on how best to raise these concerns with the local authorities and through the local judicial system. However, the FCO support for victims to seek legal representation is minimal in that they only provide victims with a list of local lawyers. Victims have told us that the FCO will not comment on the suitability of those lawyers, they are not vetted and can't tell victims whether the lawyers speak English or have experience in working with foreign clients. Some of the victims we spoke to were surprised and distressed at the lack of support in this area and also at the expensive legal costs they have to incur with no financial support from the FCO.

When she got back to England, Lisa contacted the British Embassy in France to ask them about instructing a lawyer, how to find one and how this could be funded. The British Embassy gave Lisa a list of English speaking lawyers but said they weren't allowed to give her any advice on legal matters and Lisa would have to pay for the legal services herself. Lisa made several requests for legal aid both to the British Embassy and the lawyer to pay the legal fees, but she was told this would not be available.

Case study 2

One victim told us that he was conned out of money by one of the lawyers recommended by the FCO.

Andrew needed to hire a lawyer to represent the family at the trial. The embassy gave Andrew a list of lawyers based in Bangkok but they would not recommend which ones they should use. Andrew wanted to know if any of the 12 names the FCO supplied had been vetted, whether they spoke English and if they were professional. 'We were in England; our daughter had just been murdered and we were given a list of names. It is completely alien to you and you have to make a decision. We were looking for a steer but they would not give any advice. We were ripped off by a lawyer for £3,000 who was supposed to be in the law society.'

Case study 9

One of the victims we spoke to said they had paid out costly fees for lawyers abroad who had not been particularly effective because the police were not willing to cooperate with them.

A solicitor was hired in India (by Victim Support) who visited the police station, but the solicitor was simply left waiting by the police and eventually ignored. It was decided there was no point in any further attempts to instigate an investigation into Steve's death in India as the police were not willing to respond.

Case study 3

One of the victims was provided with free legal advice by a lawyer that she was put in touch with by the charity Murdered Abroad (case study 7). Another victim received support from the Lucie Blackman Trust to attend the trial abroad:

Claire travelled to Greece for the trial with the support of the Lucie Blackman Trust who paid for the flights. The perpetrator was found guilty of negligent manslaughter and received a two-month driving ban and 18 months suspended sentence.

Case study 12

Another victim who had been told by the FCO she would not be required to attend the trial was accompanied by a British Family Liaison Officer to the trial abroad.

Contrary to procedures described by the FCO, a week before the trial, a British police officer turned up at Charlotte's door with a witness summons and told Charlotte she was required to give evidence in James's trial in Greece. Charlotte was allocated a Family Liaison Officer who went with her to the trial and helped to fend off the press.

Case study 7

The victim of the terrorist attack in Sousse, Tunisia was particularly disappointed with the advice, support, information and communication that she received from the FCO regarding the trial of her husband's killers. She pointed out in particular that the British FCO support differed markedly from the support given to victims from other countries by their national authorities.

When the terrorists responsible for the Sousse attack were put on trial in Tunisia, Cheryl and her family wanted to be kept informed about how the case was progressing. She wanted to know who the perpetrators were, that they had been tried and how they would be punished, to bring justice for the death of her husband and the other victims of the attack. She received snippets of information from the FCO, but often this was after some of the families had already come across trial information updates in the international media.

The FCO stance was that the victims should sign up as 'civil parties' to the court proceedings in order to be kept fully informed. However, the legal representatives hired by the victims for the case against the travel company advised the victims not to register as 'civil parties' because it would compromise their civil case. The victims did not attend the trial because of this and there was no British representation at the trial by the FCO. Seven men were convicted and given life sentences and others were given sentences between one and 16 years. A further 25 men were acquitted and released from prison. The families know nothing about the details of the convicted, the offences they were convicted of and why some received life sentences, others did not. They believe the public prosecutor is not happy with the sentences handed down and plans to appeal. The reasons for the appeal again are unknown. Cheryl has asked on four occasions to be given more information regarding those who have been charged, and convicted and clarification of what role they took in the attack and the sentence they were given, but to no avail.

This is in stark contrast to the way victims of the attack from Belgium and France were treated by officials from their home countries. The French and Belgian Governments liaised with the Tunisian authorities and arranged for a video-link to be established so that victims living in those countries could watch the proceedings. No such arrangements were put in place for victims based in the UK. It is not clear why.

Case study 11

Support from banks and insurance companies

Most victims that we spoke to who had insurance either as separate travel insurance or through their bank account were positive about the help and support provided by these commercial organisations. Travel insurance companies helped with repatriation costs and also with some travel costs for families.

The travel company were very helpful to the family and arranged for Charlotte's Mum to travel to Greece by lunch time the next day. Robert initially paid for the flight but the travel company reimbursed him.

Case study 7

Some victims we spoke to noted how helpful it was for their case to be handled by a dedicated bereavement team at their bank. One victim pointed out that there is no official mechanism for families to be informed that their next of kin has a travel insurance policy.

George had recently taken out a new credit card and ticked the life assurance section on the application. It so happened that George's mail had gone to his Mum's house and they found out about the insurance this way. 'We found out by default, there is no mechanism to do that.' Gordon contacted the HSBC and their dedicated bereavement team called him back. Insurance partners AVIVA took care of the repatriation with a local undertaker making arrangements with the undertaker in the USA.

Case study 6

A victim of terrorism identified the difficulties caused by her policy not covering acts of terrorism. She also pointed out difficulties with accessing funds for legal representation from her travel insurance which she had bought through the travel company.

Cheryl had thought she would be able to access £30,000 of legal costs from their travel insurance which was stated in their policy. However, Cheryl bought the travel insurance through the travel company and the insurance provider has stated that they cannot provide legal advice against their own partner. The insurance provider would not provide legal representation for the case against the travel company and also refused to provide it for the inquest. Cheryl has taken this decision to the financial ombudsman.

Case study 11

Victims who are not covered by travel insurance may have no choice but to have their loved one cremated abroad as a cheaper alternative to repatriation.

Steve did not have any travel insurance and without the money to repatriate his body, with no support and feeling under pressure from the FCO, Amanda agreed to having Steve's body cremated in India.

Case study 3

Support from Charities

Victim Support is funded to deliver The Homicide Service for bereaved families of victims of homicides committed in England and Wales and abroad. Some victims reported their positive experience of help and support provided through Victim Support.

Cheryl and her family received much needed support from Victim Support through the Homicide Service. She found the Victim Support workers to be very understanding and supportive. Her son Mathew was at university at the time and one of the support workers met with university officials, advocating on his behalf.

Case study 11

Claire and her family received help from Victim Support through the Homicide Service. She describes this help as a 'God send.' Claire and her daughter received trauma and bereavement counselling through Victim Support which is still on-going. They also paid for the solicitor that Claire hired for the trial in Greece.

Case study 12

After the funeral, Richard's daughter contacted the FCO and referred her to Victim Support who provided six weeks of counselling. Her brother and sister did not want to access this support.

Case study 5

However, some victims may fall short of the eligibility criteria for support from the Homicide Service. Some countries may not carry out a thorough investigation into the death despite there being suspicious circumstances. This may be due to less rigorous investigations, or even corruption in the country of death. If the death is not treated as a homicide in that country, the family is not eligible for support from the Homicide Service in the UK. This is despite such victims' families having to cope with exactly the same processes of repatriation and other expenses such as translation and legal costs as any victim that does have their case labelled as homicide.

One victim whose daughter died in Azerbaijan was told she was not eligible for support from victim services in the UK.

Throughout the whole experience Ludmila received no support from victim support services in the UK. She contacted the Homicide Service and was told they couldn't help her because Elizabeth's death occurred abroad. Similarly, she contacted a victim support charity and was told she was not eligible because the case was abroad. Ludmila would have expected more help from the FCO, particularly help with translation, legal fees and help to organise her daughter's repatriation.

Case study 4

Another victim who was unable to gain any support from the Homicide Service was directed by the Ministry of Justice to what turned out to be a fraudulent charity for support.

Searching for help and support, Gordon heard nothing from the Homicide Service. After writing to the MoJ, Gordon received a letter from a junior minister in the Ministry of Justice saying there was nothing they could do, but signposted the family to a charity for support. Gordon looked up the phone number he was given by the MoJ and found that it charged £6 per minute. The leader of the charity has since been exposed as a fraudster in the national press.

Case study 6

Many of the victims we spoke to were recruited to take part in the study from a charity called Murdered Abroad (formerly known as SAMM Abroad). The victims spoke highly of the help and support provided by Murdered Abroad.

One victim who was not eligible for support from the Homicide Service as her husband's suspicious death was not labelled as homicide, discussed how much she appreciated the support and advice from Murdered Abroad.

Trudy and her family have had no official support, for example from the Homicide Service, because despite not being able to rule out third party involvement, no verdict

of homicide has been reached. She has written to her MP who expressed their sympathy but could do nothing to help. The only sources of support Trudy has received have been from the bank in repatriating Russell's body and the charity Murdered Abroad who have provided emotional support and practical advice. The advice and support from a former police officer associated with the charity has been particularly helpful.

Case study 1

Although the family have found Murdered Abroad very helpful, they feel completely unsupported by UK official authorities: 'Murdered Abroad are the light in the darkness. The official authorities are a waste of space.'

Case study 5

Some victims find that they particularly benefit from Murdered Abroad's form of peer support with families who have been through the same experiences as themselves.

Four years after Georges' death, Gordon and Catherine came across the charity Murdered Abroad. They regularly attend support group meetings, finding solace in the company of other families in a similar situation, but they are concerned to find that other victims with more recent experiences continue to face the same challenges.

Case study 6

As well as providing emotional support, victims also said that Murdered Abroad provided practical help and advice. This included putting victims in touch with lawyers to provide pro bono legal advice along with advice from former police Senior Investigating Officers who work with the charity, or serving police officers who have attended one of the charity's meetings.

Charlotte's Mum got support from Murdered Abroad who she found helpful in terms of both practical and emotional support. Murdered Abroad put Charlotte in touch with a lawyer who provided pro bono legal advice for the case.

Case study 7

The family have found support from the charity Murdered Abroad) to be very helpful. Richard's former wife attends their meetings around four times a year. 'That's the first time someone has offered to help us. [A police officer at the meeting] said, I'll see what I can do for you. It wasn't our local police force, it just happened to be the police force that was hosting the meeting... He's my angel. We don't want to put too much expectation on his shoulders but he said the minimum he could do would be to open an official channel of communication with the Belgian police and that would be so important for us so that we know where the investigation is.'

Case study 5

Some of the victims that we spoke to received help and support from other specialised charities.

One little girl whose brother was murdered by their father in Greece received help and support from Winston's Wish a charity that provides services to bereaved children. (Case study 7)

A victim of the terrorist attack in Sousse received some emergency funds from the Red Cross when she was in Turkey. Having no access to criminal injuries compensation, and facing financial hardship, she had to put that emergency money towards the costs of her husband's funeral. (Case study 11)

Support from UK Police

Families who are bereaved by homicide in the UK are allocated a police Family Liaison Officer whose role is to provide a two-way flow of information between victims and investigative teams in the police. In cases where victims are murdered abroad a UK Family Liaison Officer can also fulfil this role as well as helping families to understand legal systems and procedures. When policing abroad is less thorough and perhaps an investigation does not proceed despite there being obvious suspicious circumstances in the death, a UK Family Liaison Officer may not be allocated because there is no investigation either abroad or in the UK for the FLO to liaise with. This can however leave victims feeling unsupported by the UK police particularly when victims whose loved one has died abroad under suspicious circumstances face the same difficulties as those whose case is undergoing a murder investigation.

Amanda felt there was not a sufficient investigation into her partner's death. She was not allocated a Family Liaison Officer from the British Police and had no way of liaising with the Indian police following the brief phone call she had to identify Steve's body.

Case study 3

Trudy and her family have had no official support, for example from the Homicide Service or the police, because despite not being able to rule out third party involvement, no verdict of homicide has been reached. She has written to her MP who expressed sympathy but could do nothing to help.

Case study 1

Even in some cases that were clearly homicide and were being investigated as such abroad, victims are not allocated a UK Family Liaison Officer and struggle to be kept up to date about what is happening in the investigation and to understand the legal system abroad. FLOs can also help victims to navigate the pressures put on them by the press. Having no FLO can leave victims to handle this intrusion into their privacy alone at such a difficult time.

The family were not allocated a Family Liaison Officer in the UK and found it hard to receive information and communication about progress in the investigation of their father's death. 'I have tried to get us some help and communication to see how the investigation is going. They say they will do this but they don't. Other families this has happened to get an FLO and an investigating officer in this country. At least we would have had a channel of communication to the Belgian police, but we've never had that. We've been floundering around for six and a half years and the only communication has been unofficial with a Belgian policeman.'

Case study 5

Lisa was not offered a Family Liaison Officer by the British police or an equivalent by the French authorities. Lisa feels this would have been most helpful for her in coping with the immediate aftermath and proceedings following her mother's murder. 'We

should've had someone to explain to us what had actually happened to my Mum, we never found that out, someone to explain the legal proceedings in France, what we were to do, how it should be funded. We were in a situation where we believed what we were told because we just hoped it was right. We needed someone to help us handling press and media, we needed someone to protect us from the media.'

Case study 2

One victim we spoke to was only allocated a Family Liaison Officer after escalating her complaint about not having one.

Initially Claire was not allocated a Family Liaison Officer (FLO). Claire wrote to the Chief Constable of her local police force and the Association of Police Chief Officers and had meetings with senior police officials and then was allocated a FLO.

Case study 12

When families are allocated a FLO, they don't always find them to be helpful or informative, and one victim told us that their FLO did not follow through on their offers of support.

'The FLO was not helpful. It was just lip service because I stomped my feet and insisted I have one. The FLO said we can't tell you anything because of red tape.'

Case study 12

Two local British police came to the family's door. They introduced themselves as family liaison officers and explained their role. Catherine and Gordon would have appreciated help from the British police but the FLOs did not follow up as promised. '[The FLOs said] you seem to have a good handle on things, but we will be in touch and help you, and when there is an inquest we can help you then. But they left that day and we never heard from them again. We had no family liaison, they didn't liaise with the American police, they didn't liaise with the FCO or the coroner's office.'

Case study 6

Some victims reported their FLO had said they could support them by accompanying them to the trial abroad, but this support was not actually available.

However, the FLO was not very informed about the case and Claire had to tell the FLO what was going on rather than the other way around. She was told the FLO would accompany her to Greece for the trial, but he did not turn up at the airport. Later, Claire was given conflicting advice and told that FLOs are not able to travel abroad for trials.

Case study 12

Andrew's FLO wanted to travel to Thailand with the family but, the FLO could not convince his superior officer that it was necessary and was told there was no budget to do so.

Case study 9

The victim of terrorism that took part in this research spoke of her satisfaction with the support that she received from her FLO, she was grateful for their help. However, she pointed out a lack in equality for victims who had survived the attack compared with the bereaved victims.

'The injured victims feel like they have been treated differently. There's a hierarchy of loss but everyone's life is equally important. When you start putting a hierarchy in place it makes other people's loss seem less significant and it shouldn't be the case.'

Case study 11

When one victim complained about the lack of support from his local police, he found the response to his complaint just added to his frustrations with British authorities.

Gordon complained about the lack of support from the British police to the Ministry of Justice and got nowhere. He complained to his local MP, but the reply had clearly been copied and pasted from another correspondence by the MP's assistant. When there was a change of MP in his local area, Gordon contacted the new MP who told him she could not raise questions in parliament because she was a serving cabinet minister. However, she did get some of the answers to questions sought by the family directly from the US authorities.

Case study 6

One victim went so far as to say he felt the British Police were obstructive when he was trying to gain information and support from the FCO. Another victim felt a lack of trust in his local police to keep his family safe following the murder of his grandson.

'I thought, who are you anyway? I'm trying to talk to the FCO. It was like he was telling the FCO yay or nay. It wasn't explained to us what it had to do with the policeman. We're not the enemy here. We are the grieving family of an English murder victim. The police man was totally obstructive and his presence and role was never explained.'

Case study 9

Robert was concerned for the safety of Charlotte and her daughter. Representatives from the police and probation services were involved in a Multi-Agency Public Protection Meeting (MAPP) and assured Robert they would be monitoring James's whereabouts but Robert was not convinced they could keep Charlotte and Ella safe.

Case study 7

In contrast, when police officers are informative and deal with victims with empathy and compassion and act as a liaison between the various authorities, victims can benefit greatly from their support.

When Sue met with officers from her local police she found them to be very supportive. They pushed and queried both the FCO and the Thai embassy on her behalf. They developed a good relationship with the Thai police in those early days, though this has broken down as the years have passed, Sue feels that the local police did all they could to support her.

Case study 10

They were allocated a police Family Liaison Officer (FLO) who put them in touch with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the charity Murdered Abroad.

Case study 9

Directly after the attack Cheryl phoned her local police force, seeking support for herself and the other British victims. They received phone calls from her local police

and from New Scotland yard. A team of British police flew out to support them in Tunisia the next day.

Case study 11

Financial support

Victims of murder abroad face many more costs than victims in the UK, many of which are totally unexpected. This can include costs of repatriation, translation and interpretation as well as travel costs to attend investigations and trials abroad. In most cases victims are required to meet these costs themselves and this could prevent them from attending the trial.

It took Ludmila three weeks in Baku to organise the repatriation. She was glad to be going home, knowing that her daughter's body was being returned to the UK. At the airport she was stopped at passport control and ordered to pay £300 in cash before she could leave the country. Ludmila wasn't aware this would happen and it was another frightening experience for Ludmila adding further to the stress of the whole trip

Case study 4

Travelling for the trial came at great expense to the family who had to fund the trip themselves. Costs could be claimed at the court but this was just a nominal amount of around twenty euros.

Case study 7

With no financial help from the UK authorities, victims may turn to many sources for financial support including commercial organisations such as airlines and even the press:

Andrew and his family travelled to Thailand on a number of occasions. They had some financial help from a charity, but had to meet most of the costs themselves. British Airways were supportive and gave the family a discounted rate on flights. On one occasion some British journalists in Thailand paid some of their expenses in return for an exclusive a story. 'I thought there would be more help from the embassy, maybe a fund or agreements that we could pay it back over a longer term. You might not be able to afford to go there.'

Case study 9

British victims of homicide abroad are not entitled to claim criminal injuries compensation in the UK. Some European Union countries have a reciprocal arrangement with the UK so that British victims can claim compensation in the country their next of kin was killed in, and some countries such as the USA have compensation scheme that can be accessed by foreign nationals though the victims that we spoke to did not manage to do so successfully.

George was survived by his 9-month-old daughter who has not received any financial support following her father's death. Although the USA has a criminal injuries compensation scheme, George was killed in one of three US states that has opted out of the scheme. Gordon wrote to the state governor, US ambassador and US government about this issue. The US ambassador replied, explaining the legalities of the situation. The state governor agreed that there was a problem but said that they could not make a payment due to state legislation. Gordon understands from these

communications that there are federal funds available but has not had a reply from the USA federal government.

Case study 6

One victim told us that she had to use nearly all of the compensation she was ordered by the French court to pay costly legal fees.

After the trial there was a meeting at court to discuss compensation for Lisa's family. Lisa's lawyer asked the court for €50,000 but the court offered €20,000. Lisa appealed the amount on the advice of her lawyer but the same offer came back. Lisa's lawyer suggested she take this to a second stage appeal process, but this involved another appearance in court which Lisa could not face having found the first court appearance extremely traumatizing. Despite the lawyer initially saying his fees would come directly from the court, they were instead deducted from the compensation. This left Lisa and her husband with little money from the compensation award.

Case study 2

Some victims told us about the severe effects of financial difficulties after losing their loved one abroad and having little or no access to criminal injuries compensation.

Losing her mother in such traumatic circumstances left Lisa struggling to work. Her business was tied up with her house and she quickly fell into arrears and lost her home.

Case study 2

'My kids never got an allowance for their father either. I was fumbling about, getting into debt. I had no support at all it was really hard. I didn't just lose my partner and the father of my three children. I've lost an income and I've lost a baby sitter for me to go out and work. At the time I was self-employed and my business went out the window...How am I supposed to pay this money back?'

Case study 3

Victims not entitled to claim criminal injuries compensation told us of the extra stress and anxiety that financial hardships caused at such a difficult time in their lives. One victim explained how money worries compounded the effect of her bereavement and suggested it would be helpful if she could access some practical support to help her cope with financial matters even if no financial support was available.

'We are trying to get back on track, but anxiety about money doesn't help recovery and there is nobody to help manage that... There could be four letters a day asking for different things. I would phone up and there is not one person to speak to. I had to keep on repeating the story of my husband's murder to several people. You are dealing with different Government departments. What would help is if there was a key person allocated. If you could give them consent to deal with your affairs, take the lead in conversations on your behalf.'

Case study 11

Following the terrorist attacks in Tunisia, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme was amended to allow victims of terrorism abroad to apply for criminal injuries compensation. The Scheme is one of last resort, so victims that can pursue a civil claim are required to do

so first. They are then entitled to apply for criminal injuries compensation after the avenue of civil recompense has been exhausted. This rule has been applied inconsistently for victims of the Tunisia attacks. Victims who applied relatively quickly after the attack were awarded compensation and have since been told they will be required to pay the money back if they are awarded compensation through the civil suite they have taken out against the travel company. Victims who were slower to make their application have had their application put on hold until the civil case has concluded.

The victim of the Tunisia attacks that we spoke to for this report has not been awarded criminal injuries compensation and is waiting for the civil case to conclude. Victims are usually provided with funds to be used towards funeral costs as part of the compensation award. As this victim was not awarded compensation, she was also not awarded funeral costs and had to use the emergency funds supplied by the Red Cross towards her husband's funeral. She felt that having no access to the money when she most needed it has hampered her ability to cope and recover and has meant she has had to return to work before she was quite ready.

'I felt like I was going cap in hand for something I was entitled to. Other victims that got in quicker received money from CICA and were told they would have to pay it from compensation received in the civil case. This meant I had to go back to work sooner than I would have liked.'

Case study 11

Post mortems and inquests

Post mortems and inquests can be a traumatic and stressful experience for victims of homicide, but victims of homicide abroad often face further difficulties in terms of delays, poor communication and lack of support for translation of key documents.

A lack of communication and information from official sources meant that Lisa found out the results of the post-mortem in the newspapers rather than from the authorities and she never received the post-mortem documentation.

Case study 2

Amanda waited 3 months for the results of the post mortem. She received 5 pages of the report, translated from the original 32-page document.

Case study 3

A post mortem was carried out in Italy 3 days later and the family were informed that Russell died of a head injury and that he also sustained injuries to his stomach. This news was delivered in broken English and the post mortem documents were not translated for the family.

Case study 1

A post mortem was carried out in Thailand. Sue did not receive any of the documentation.

Case study 10

One victim told us that the UK coroner's office was not happy when she decided to get documents translated herself after receiving no translation support from the authorities.

'He [the official from the coroner's office] got very angry with me on the phone, he started pushing emails every two minutes, telling me off for having done the translation myself. In the end I said I'm not communicating with you anymore. I wasn't happy with this and I said so.' Ludmila received an apology for this behaviour after complaining to the official's line manager. The inquest was postponed for some time, awaiting documents and evidence to be sent from Azerbaijan. After months of delay and difficulties in liaising between the two countries, the UK coroner found a final verdict; suspicious accidental death.

Case study 4

Another victim told us of the importance of having legal representation at the inquest which victims had to pay for themselves.

A post mortem was carried out in Tunisia. Cheryl requested the documentation and it was translated for her. A further post mortem and an inquest was held in the UK. Initially Cheryl and the other victims' families did not have legal representation. When they found out that the travel company, police and FCO all had legal representation they decided to appoint a lawyer themselves. Cheryl was glad they did, because it meant they could address questions to the coroner and they were able to increase the scope of the inquest to include what happened on the day of the attack rather than just ascertaining the cause of death.

Case study 11

Appendix 2: Case study details

	Case	Year	Country	The Crime
Case study 1	Trudy	2016	Italy	In June 2016, Russell and his friends went on a car rally trip across Europe raising funds for charity. Russell died in Italy, and although at the time it was ruled by the Italian authorities to be a tragic accident, the subsequent inquest in the UK could not rule out third party involvement.
Case study 2	Lisa	2015	France	Lisa's elderly mother was brutally murdered in France almost four years ago. The perpetrator of the murder was a convicted serial killer who had been released from prison by the French Government after having served only 7 years.
Case study 3	Amanda	2014	India	Amanda's partner Steve died in Delhi, India in 2014. They had been in a relationship for 12 years and had three children. Steve had been in India for two months, travelling in Mumbai, Goa and New Delhi. Steve went missing for 17 hours after reportedly checking into a hotel in New Delhi. Police officers found Steve's body in the street a very poor condition, wrapped in tarpaulin. This suggests that his death had in fact occurred well before the 17 hours he was known to be missing.
Case study 4	Ludmilla	2015	Azerbaijan	Ludmila's daughter Elizabeth died in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2015 after falling from the 12 th floor apartment that she shared with her boyfriend. She had been working in Baku for just over a year. A month before she died, Elizabeth had returned to the UK to visit her mother and friends. She had seemed her usual happy, energetic self and said she would be back to visit again soon.
Case study 5	Richard	2012	Belgium	Richard was shot and killed outside a restaurant in Belgium in 2012. Richard, a British citizen was resident in Belgium at the time. No one has yet been charged with his murder.
Case study 6	Catherine and Gordon	2009	USA.	Catherine's son, Gordon's stepson, George was killed in America in November 2009. He was on a road trip with two friends, heading to visit George's Dad who lived there. After a long day's drive, George and his friends went out for a meal. A young man armed with a gun came into the restaurant and ordered everyone to sit on the floor. He snatched a lady's bag and shot his gun randomly. A bullet ricocheted off a table hitting George and the gunman fled the scene. The perpetrator pleaded guilty of three counts of robbery, firearms and manslaughter and is serving three 30-year sentences consecutively for each crime, with no option of parole. The district attorney consulted George's family about the charges. Catherine could have pressed for a charge of murder but does not believe in the death penalty.

Case study 7	Robert	2006	Greece	In 2006 Robert's step daughter Charlotte went on holiday to Greece with her husband James and two children, Ella aged 2 and Luke, aged 6. Following an argument, they decided to terminate the holiday early. Charlotte was packing the suitcase when James pushed Ella and Luke from the balcony before he himself jumped from the fourth floor. Ella's fall was broken slightly by a bush and she survived, but Luke was killed by the fall. James only sustained a broken leg. James was acquitted of Luke's murder by the Greek court on the grounds of temporary insanity.
Case study 8	Emmy	2005	USA.	Emmy's daughter, Julia, died in a car crash in the United States in 2005. She was 34 years old. Julia had travelled to the USA to study. She had only been there a few days when she spent an evening at a barbeque with some English friends. Julia was getting a lift home from a friend when the car crashed down 600ft into a nearby canyon and smashed against a tree. The driver survived the crash, sustaining only a broken rib, but Julia suffered fatal injuries.
Case study 9	Andrew	2004	Thailand	Andrew's daughter Jessica was killed along with her boyfriend when they were on holiday in Thailand in 2004. The perpetrator, a serving Thai police officer, was convicted of their murder and is currently serving a life sentence of fifty years and another sentence of 33 years and four months.
Case study 10	Sue	2000	Thailand	Sue's daughter Sarah was raped and murdered when she was travelling in Thailand in the Summer of 2000. The investigation into Sarah's death is still on-going in Thailand, but no one has been charged with her murder. The investigation is due to close next year as there is a 20-year time limit in Thailand for murder cases.
Case study 11	Cheryl	2015	Tunisia	Cheryl's husband John was killed in the Sousse beach terrorist attack in Tunisia in June 2015. John was one of 30 British victims to lose their lives in the massacre. Seven men were convicted and given life sentence and others were given sentences between one and 16 years. A further 25 men were acquitted and released from prison
Case study 12	Claire	2014	Greece	In 2014, Claire's son James was killed in Greece by a drunk driver. He had been on holiday with friends after completing his A levels. The perpetrator was found guilty of negligent manslaughter and received a two-month driving ban and 18 months suspended sentence. He later lodged an unsuccessful appeal.

Appendix 3: Parliamentary question regarding the number of British murder and manslaughter cases abroad per year.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has provided the following answer to the written parliamentary question (208405):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of British citizens who have died abroad as a result of (a) murder and (b) manslaughter in each year since 2000. (208405)

Tabled on: 14 January 2019

Answer:

Harriett Baldwin:

We estimate there are approximately 60-90 new cases of British nationals who have died abroad as a result of murder or manslaughter reported to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office every year. Our current case management system includes data from 2008 only and does not differentiate between murder and manslaughter. These figures can be found below:

2008 – 66

2009 – 68

2010 – 68

2011 – 78

2012 – 53

2013 – 78

2014 – 84

2015 – 88

2016 – 65

2017 – 74

2018 - 73

The answer was submitted on 17 Jan 2019 at 14:22.

Appendix 4: Glossary of acronyms

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CC	Chief Constables
HS	Homicide Service
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
FCO	Foreign & Commonwealth Office
FLACSS	Family Liaison & Co-ordination of Support Services
FLO	Family Liaison Officer
NPCC	National Police Chiefs Council
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
PCSO	Police community support officer
SIO	Senior Investigating Officer
VCoP	Victims' Code of Practice



Victims of Homicide Abroad

Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

Clive House

5th Floor

70 Petty France

London

SW1H 9EX



e: victims.commissioner@victimscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk