

Overview of the 2011 Family Forum



**Families & Friends
of Missing Persons**
Attorney General & Justice

PURPOSE OF THE DAY

The 2011 Forum for Families and Friends of Missing Persons was held on Saturday 16 April. The aim of the Forum was to provide the opportunity for families and friends of missing persons to hear from key agencies working in the area of missing persons and to meet others living with the disappearance of a missing person.

ATTENDANCE

Seventeen family members, friends and supporters attended the day, along with five police officers and six representatives from FFMPU and Victim Services. Supporters included three representatives from NSW Missing Persons Committee and a visitor from Missing People UK.

Three family members travelled from Victoria to attend the Forum.

An interpreter was present for a non-English speaking family.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Chief Inspector Paul Roussos spoke about the work of the NSW Police Missing Persons Unit and the Unit's role in providing support to Local Area Commands in missing persons' investigations. Chief Inspector Roussos spoke of continuing efforts to improve across border communication in missing persons investigations and the anticipated development of a national database for missing persons.

Angus Huntsdale, media spokesperson from Department of Attorney General and Justice spoke to families about the media's involvement in missing persons matters and provided useful tips for families when the media is involved.

Peter Trebilco from NSW Missing Persons Committee Inc spoke about the development of the Committee and the valuable contribution from family members since its inception. Peter invited families and friends present to consider joining the Committee to boost numbers and reinvigorate it.

Helen Morrell from Missing People UK spoke about the purpose of her visit to Australia. Helen has been granted a Churchill Fellowship to meet with organisations and individuals working in the field of missing persons and loss in Australia. Helen has met with key agencies including those providing counselling and support services, search agencies and those involved in research. Helen is particularly interested in talking to families about their experiences and invited them to approach her at the Forum to share their insights and experiences.

OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the 'formal' presentations, lunch was served and attendees continued to talk informally, until the day concluded at 2.30pm.

Many of the families agreed to exchange phone numbers and/or email addresses for ongoing contact and support. This list will be circulated to those who requested it.

Most attendees completed evaluation forms. The opportunity to meet and talk with other families was reported as the most positive outcome of the day.

ANNUAL EVENT

FFMPU remains committed to hosting an annual forum for the family and friends of missing persons. We will continue to talk with families about planning for future forums and will incorporate the feedback received this year in the planning for 2012. Feedback is welcomed and can be provided by contacting **FFMPU** on **1800 227 772** or **ffmpu@agd.nsw.gov.au**

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CONTACT DETAILS

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