

Department of Justice
**Strategic
Priorities**

09-10

A statement of our
focus and direction

DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE



Copies of the Department of Justice
Strategic Priorities 2009-10 can be
found at www.justice.vic.gov.au

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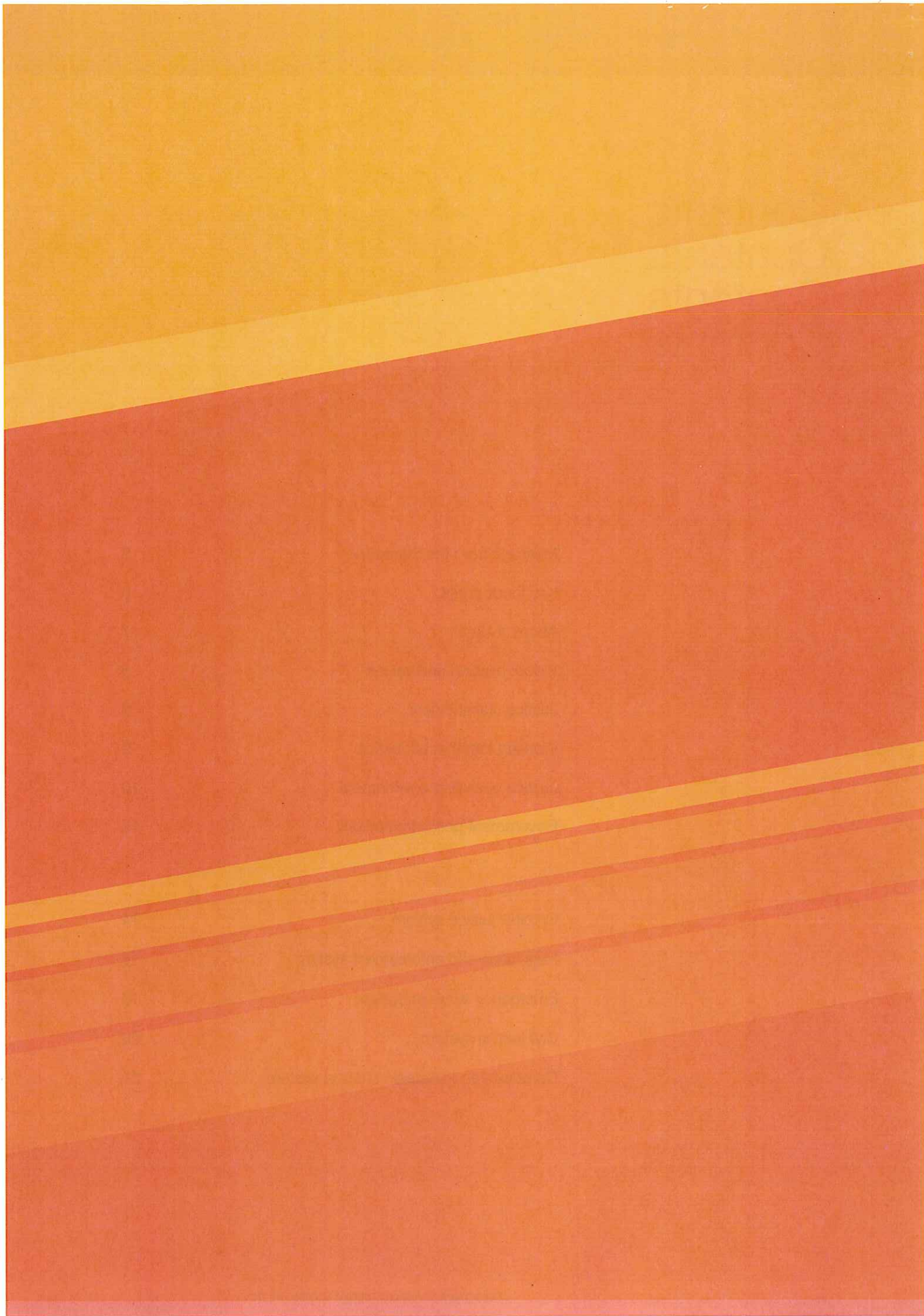
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Strategic Priorities

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Message from the Secretary Message from the Secretary Message from the Secretary Message from the Secretary



The release of *Justice Strategic Priorities 2009–10* marks the fifth year of our strategic management approach to critical issues. It recognises that we must not only focus on day-to-day service delivery, but also tackle broader challenges in ways that make a positive difference to justice outcomes.

It is a time of complex change. The global financial crisis, climate change and technological and generational shifts will affect future demand and delivery of justice services in Victoria.

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We are heading in the right direction. We have invested in strengthening regional management to be better connected and engaged with the community, in reforming the law and improving access to justice, in introducing problem solving courts, and in the endless pursuit of greater knowledge and innovation.

Everyone in the Department of Justice and its statutory entities should feel proud of the significant progress made in 2008–2009.

Some highlights:

- crime detection and prevention initiatives to ensure Victoria remains the safest state in Australia. Since 2000–2001 overall crime has decreased by 25.5 per cent
- sweeping changes to the structure of the gambling industry, action on problem gambling and new arrangements for ongoing funding for the racing industry
- implementing the Victorian Alcohol Action Plan to address social harm from alcohol misuse, in a partnership between government, licensees and the community
- release of the Attorney-General's *Justice Statement 2*. Projects underway include modernising several outdated laws, an overhaul of Victoria's equal opportunity laws to address systemic discrimination, and appropriate dispute resolution (ADR) initiatives to make civil dispute resolution cheaper, faster and fairer
- response to the global financial crisis with enhanced financial counselling, retrenched worker advisory services and a rural Victoria drought response
- a new Family Violence Protection Bill with associated promotional campaign – ENOUGH! – as part of improvements in criminal justice system responses to family violence and sexual assault

We are heading in the right direction. We have invested in strengthening regional management to be better connected and engaged with the community, in reforming the law and improving access to justice, in introducing problem solving courts, and in the endless pursuit of greater knowledge and innovation.

- further strengthening our partnership approaches to Koori justice, justice for refugees and to mental health issues in the justice system
- implementing the Council of Australian Governments national reform agenda and improved regulatory processes to reduce red tape
- investing in treatment and rehabilitation services in prisons and extended supervision orders to protect the community from serious sex offenders
- preparing government agencies and courts for their new charter obligations under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.

Justice Strategic Priorities 2009–10 builds on these achievements and emphasises seven key focus areas, reflecting the priorities of government and the desire to lead and innovate on key issues:

- responding to the Victorian bushfires
- restructuring the gambling industry/racing industry
- addressing public safety and crime
- intervening to minimise social harm from alcohol misuse
- implementing *Justice Statement 2*
- closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
- sustainable justice.

Justice Strategic Priorities 2009–10 also describes a range of other challenges for Justice business units in 2009–10. I commend this statement to you and look forward to working with departmental staff, statutory entities and volunteers to continue our record of achievement.

Penny Armytage
Secretary

Key focus areas

Key focus areas

Key focus areas

Key focus areas

Responding to the Victorian bushfires

On Saturday 7 February 2009, Victoria experienced the most devastating bushfires in its history. Tragically 173 lives were lost and many homes and businesses were destroyed. The Victorian Government has embarked on the largest recovery and rebuilding program it has ever conducted. The Department of Justice and its agencies form key parts of the Government's response capacity and will continue to support the Royal Commission into Victoria's bushfires and implement initiatives so Victoria is better prepared for the next fire season.

Restructuring the gambling industry/racing industry

Sweeping changes to the structure of Victoria's gambling industry were announced in April 2008. This followed the department's review of gambling licences, including lotteries licences, concluded in 2007, and the first phase of the electronic gaming machine, Keno and wagering licences review, concluded in April 2008. Work has commenced to implement and transition to the new gambling industry arrangements from 2012. Wagering will include new arrangements for ongoing funding of the racing industry.

Addressing public safety and crime

Victoria has seen a decline in the overall crime rate, dropping by 25.5 per cent since 2001-01. However there has been a recent rise in antisocial behaviour, including violence in public places resulting in a 20 per cent increase in public assaults in the past five years; most of the recorded increase was in night-time assaults occurring in the inner city.

The 2009-10 budget committed an additional \$82 million over four years to reduce crime, improve public safety and provide Victoria Police with improved infrastructure to ensure Victorians remain safe.

On August 9 2009, the Premier announce a range of actions in response to continuing criminal behaviour that threatens public safety. Actions taken include the addition of 120 police officers and new police powers to combat violence and antisocial behaviour, made up of tougher search powers for knives and other weapons; enforcement for drunk and disorderly conduct; and the introduction of 'move-on' powers.

The Department of Justice and Victoria Police are committed to continuing work to address issues threatening public safety, including any hot spots accross the State.

Intervening to minimise social harm from alcohol misuse

On 2 May 2008, the Premier announced the five-year \$37.2 million Restoring the Balance – *Victoria's Alcohol Action Plan 2008-2013* (the VAAP). The VAAP details specific immediate actions to be undertaken, and establishes a long-term framework for change to prevent and reduce harm associated with alcohol misuse in Victoria. The department has lead responsibility for a significant number of the actions, and an important role to promote further work across government to better understand and respond to the drivers of alcohol related harms particularly alcohol related violence and antisocial behaviour. The department has primary responsibility for regulating the alcohol industry, and will continue to build on the significant reforms in the past 12 months - including enhanced regulatory and enforcement powers, the introduction of a new Compliance Directorate, and a comprehensive review of liquor licensing fees and categories.

Implementing Justice Statement 2

Justice Statement 1 was a bold vision for reform under the themes modernising justice, protecting rights and addressing disadvantage. *Justice Statement 2* continues these themes, extending them to focus on reducing the cost of justice, appropriate dispute resolution and civil justice reform, and creating an engaged and unified court system. It recognises the role that a properly functioning justice system plays in a healthy, fair and resilient community and will ensure that the justice system keeps contributing to the prosperity and wellbeing of all Victorians into the 21st century.

Closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Over representation of Indigenous Australians in the criminal justice system is linked to very high levels of disadvantage experienced by Indigenous communities. Recognising this, the *Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement 2* was developed as a joint initiative between the Department of Justice, Department of Human Services, the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee and the Indigenous community.

In addition, the Victorian Government's interest in reforming the native title framework has the potential to significantly contribute to reconciliation and address the inequalities and disadvantages experienced by Indigenous people in Victoria.

These measures, along with Council of Australian Governments (COAG) *Closing the Gap* initiatives, will build on progress made to improve outcomes for Victoria's Indigenous people.

Sustainable Justice

The department is responding to a wide range of issues, including the global economic downturn, demographic change, the introduction of new technologies, and climate change. Guiding principles for all responses are that results be sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. To meet these challenges, the department also needs to be flexible and adaptive. A sustainability framework will be developed to capture existing and new initiatives aimed at reforming the way the department and its agencies deliver internal and external services.

About Justice About Justice About Justice About Justice

The Department of Justice provides a justice policy and organisational management focus for the government. It brings together government activities concerned with reform, administration and enforcement of the law in Victoria. More than 24,000 staff, including those in Victoria Police, are employed in these activities. They are supported by almost 90,000 volunteers in agencies such as the Country Fire Authority, Lifesaving Victoria, Victoria State Emergency Service, Office of the Public Advocate and volunteer networks in the courts and correctional services.

Ministers

Hon Rob Hulls
Attorney-General
Minister for Racing

Hon Bob Cameron
Minister for Police and
Emergency Services
Minister for Corrections

Hon Tony Robinson
Minister for Gaming
Minister for Consumer Affairs

Parliamentary Secretaries

Hon Brian Tee
Justice Parliamentary Secretary

Ms Danielle Green
Emergency Services
Parliamentary Secretary

Divisions

Community Operations
and Strategy

Consumer Affairs

Courts

Gaming and Racing

Legal and Equity

Police, Emergency Services
and Corrections

Regional and Executive Services

Strategic Projects and Planning

Vision, Mission and Values

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Government | Vision | As it relates to the justice systems: - building friendly, confident and safe communities - a fairer society that reduces disadvantage and respects diversity - more quality jobs and thriving, innovative industries across Victoria - greater public participation and more accountable government - sound financial management. | | |
| Justice | Vision | A safe, just, innovative and thriving Victoria, where rights are protected and diversity embraced | | |
| Justice | Mission | To provide a justice policy and organisational management focus for the government | | |
| Our Values and Behaviours | | | | |
| Make it Happen | Respect Other People | Act with Integrity | Work Together | Serve the Community |
| think and plan ahead | treat all people with respect | accept accountability for our actions | encourage and support teamwork | engage customers and communities to assess service needs |
| focus on agreed priorities | seek different perspectives and approaches | be honest, fair and reliable | keep people informed | commit to achieving customer and community goals |
| deliver on commitments | value work/life balance | approach our work with enthusiasm and commitment | consult to achieve shared goals | deliver services professionally |
| meet agreed timelines | give and receive feedback constructively | apply sound judgement and common sense | develop and maintain positive working relationships | correct service problems promptly |
| be responsive and flexible | show consideration for each others' ideas and contributions | embrace personal and professional commitment | acknowledge and celebrate our successes | innovate to improve services |

Justice Stakeholders

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Key Client Groups | Community - Defendants - Volunteers - Special Needs Groups - Victims - Consumers and Proprietors - Witnesses - Jurors - Liquor Licensees - Problem Gamblers - Landlords and Tenants - Business - Offenders - Court Users |
| Strategic Partners | Ministerial Advisory Councils - Education - Public Prosecutions - Fire and Emergency Services - Health Services - Community Legal Centres - Police - Legal Aid - Local Government - Private Prison Managers - Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees - Courts and Tribunals - Gamblers Help - Gamblers Financial Counselling - Victims Support Agency |
| Justice Divisions | Police, Emergency Services and Corrections - Legal and Equity - Courts - Community Operations and Strategy - Consumer Affairs - Gaming and Racing - Strategic Projects and Planning - Regional and Executive Services |

Working together at Justice Working together at Justice Working together at Justice Working together at Justice

The Justice portfolio brings together government activities concerned with reform, administration and enforcement of the law in Victoria in pursuing the following objectives:

- provide protection for the rights and freedoms of all people through a fair and just system of criminal justice and an accessible, equitable and responsive civil justice system
- ensure public safety through the prevention and detection of crime
- ensure the protection of individuals and property through the prevention and suppression of fires, and the provision of coordinated emergency services
- provide a safe, just and humane correctional system
- provide an effective framework for fair trading and business affairs
- provide policy, regulatory and advocacy services that achieves a responsible, safe and sustainable environment for gambling and racing.

The Department of Justice recognises the importance of a collaborative approach with the statutory entities in the Justice portfolio. We will continue efforts to improve engagement between the department and statutory entities.

The Department of Justice, as the lead portfolio agency, is responsible for coordinating the Justice portfolio consisting of many statutory entities, courts and tribunals listed as follows.

Attorney-General

Supreme Court including Court of Appeal
County Court
Magistrates' Court
Children's Court
State Coroner
Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
Judicial Remuneration Tribunal
Municipal Electoral Tribunal
Appeal Costs Board
Committee for Public Prosecutions
Crown Counsel
Crown Counsel (Advisings)
Director of Public Prosecutions
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Forensic Leave Panel
Judicial College of Victoria
Legal Practitioner's Liability Committee
Legal Services Board
Legal Services Commissioner
Office of the Public Advocate
Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner
Office of Public Prosecutions
Sentencing Advisory Council
Solicitor for Public Prosecutions
Solicitor-General
Special Investigations Monitor
Victorian Electoral Commission
Victorian Government Solicitor
Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine
Victorian Law Reform Commission
Victoria Law Foundation
Victoria Legal Aid
Youth Parole Board (shared with Minister for Community Services)
Youth Residential Board (shared with Minister for Community Services)

Consumer Affairs

Business Licensing Authority
Director of Liquor Licensing
Estate Agents Council
Funeral Industry Ministerial Advisory Council
Liquor Control Advisory Council
Motor Car Traders Guarantee Fund Claims Committee
Prostitution Control Act Ministerial Advisory Committee

Police and Emergency Services

Chief Examiner (shared with Attorney-General)
Commissioner, Law Enforcement Data Security
Country Fire Authority
Country Fire Authority Appeals Commission
Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority
Firearms Appeals Committee
Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Appeals Commission
Office of Police Integrity
Police Appeals Board
Private Agents Registry
Victoria Police
Victoria State Emergency Service

Corrections

Adult Parole Board

Gaming

Victorian Commission for Gambling Regulation

Racing

Bookmakers and Bookmakers' Clerks Registration Committee
Greyhound Racing Victoria
Harness Racing Victoria
Racing Appeals Tribunal

Justice operating environment

Justice operating environment

Justice operating environment

Justice operating environment

Changes in the external environment play a significant role in shaping justice operations. The focus is on more innovative and creative pathways, including initiatives to better engage with the community, intervening to minimise social harm, modernising the law and court administration, developing appropriate justice responses and reducing the costs of justice. Here is a snapshot of key trends.

Demography

- Victoria's population is growing and ageing
- Regional Victoria is ageing faster than Melbourne
- The proportion of Victorians of working age is expected to begin declining in 2010, with likely skills shortages
- Victorian households are becoming smaller.

Demographic changes are impacting on patterns of offending and victimisation. The Justice Portfolio must respond to the needs of an ageing population and match physical and social infrastructure with population shifts and changes in household dynamics.

Economy

- The Victorian economy is experiencing a downward trend, due to the global financial crisis
- The service sector is becoming increasingly important
- Softening demand for labour is contributing to higher unemployment levels.

For the Justice Portfolio, some of these key economic challenges include regulation of markets, consumer protection and the need to address disadvantage and financial hardship.

Work environment

- Potential skills shortages may develop, despite higher unemployment
- Part-time and casual employment is increasing and there is demand for more flexible work arrangements.
- Work is becoming more complex.

The Justice Portfolio faces generational change and succession planning issues. Labour shortfalls may be less pronounced while the impact of the global financial crisis on superannuation is encouraging employees to retire later. However, this is likely to be temporary and the rising complexity of work has implications for training and workload. Matching the Portfolio's workforce profile with the diversity of its clients is a challenge, as is the availability of volunteers to form the mainstay of our emergency services workforce.

Energy and climate change

- Climate change and environmental sustainability have moved to the forefront of public and government consciousness
- Weather-related emergencies are becoming more frequent and severe – more heatwaves, increased bushfire risk, more severe thunderstorms, a higher likelihood of flooding and more intense droughts
- Victoria is heavily reliant on energy sources with high greenhouse gas emission levels.

Some key challenges for the Justice portfolio include the effectiveness of emergency service responses to extreme weather events and disruption to essential services infrastructure, as well as responses to rural disadvantage and resource shortages.

Health

- Life expectancy is high and increasing
- Healthcare costs are rising
- Lifestyle diseases and mental illness are key concerns
- Disadvantaged Victorians experience poorer health. Indigenous Victorians' health outcomes are significantly below the state average.

The Justice Portfolio must examine ways to address the health, addiction and behavioural problems which contribute to criminal behaviour and disadvantage. Co-morbidity between mental health, drug and alcohol and lifestyle issues amongst offenders is very high.

Education

- Educational outcomes are lower for people from poorer socio-economic backgrounds
- A link has been established between truancy and the potential for criminal behaviour
- Offenders are more likely to be unemployed and have only partially completed secondary education.

Higher levels of education create opportunities for social and economic participation, meaning greater wellbeing for both individuals and communities. Offenders tend to have lower levels of education and employment readiness and little experience of work – factors linked to recidivism.

Social identity

- Victoria is culturally diverse
- Mainstream culture is increasingly individualistic and consumption-oriented
- Some religious and cultural groups are feeling increasingly marginalised.

Victoria maintains high levels of social and cultural diversity with relatively little tension. However, the growing disparity between rich and poor, together with the emergence of sub-cultures, has the potential to increase public disorder. The increasing litigiousness of society and assertion of human rights is another trend impacting on justice services.

Technology

- High rates of Information Communication Technology (ITC) uptake and community expectations for connectivity
- New advances in science and technology assist in the investigation of crime.

Implications include responding to demand for new technology (such as forensics and online services), managing technological dependency and working in conjunction with the Federal Government to ensure legislative oversight of cyberspace environments.

Government policy framework Government policy framework Government policy framework Government policy framework

Victorian State Government policy frameworks provide direction for the work of the Department of Justice and its agencies. Social reform and service improvement imperatives are taken from the key policy documents articulating the government's broader safety and human rights agendas.

Overarching state agenda

*Action for Victoria's Future
Released: 2009*

Action for Victoria's Future presents the government's current priorities. It brings together existing strategies, statements, policies and actions under a single umbrella in the following four areas:

- Economy – resilient and strong
- Communities – planned and involved
- People – educated, healthy and involved
- Environment – sustainable and productive.

*Growing Victoria Together
Released: 2005-09*

The government's vision for Victoria to 2010 and beyond articulates the issues identified as important to Victorians and the priorities of government, to make Victoria a better place to live, work and raise a family.

The Justice Portfolio contributes to the five vision areas in the following ways:

- **Thriving Economy**
Improving business regulation, reducing the regulatory burden, delivering regional services and supporting the racing industry.

- **Quality Health and Education**
Addressing mental health issues and dealing with problem and vulnerable youth
- **Healthy Environment**
Supporting legislation to protect natural resources and improving on environmental sustainability measures
- **Caring Communities**
Reducing crime, road deaths and injuries, improving community resilience, addressing disadvantage, reducing growth in the prison population and re-offending rates
- **Vibrant Democracy**
Improving public participation on pertinent issues, modernising freedom of information and maintaining financial discipline in corporate spending.

*Statement of Government
Intentions Released: 2009*

This annual *Statement of Government Intentions* outlines five key themes, with 21 priority areas. The Department of Justice contributes as follows:

- **Jobs – a resilient economy for long term growth.** Consumer Affairs business regulation reform and implementing *Justice Statement 2* faster dispute resolution initiatives.
- **Families – people who are educated, healthy and involved.** Justice Mental Health Strategy, *Justice Statement 2* reforms, reform of equal opportunity laws, support for people with a disability in contact with the justice system, Working with Children checks, *Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement 2*, *Department of Justice Cultural Diversity Plan* and support for victims of crime

- **Communities – planned, connected and secure.** Responsible Alcohol Victoria and the *Victorian Alcohol Action Plan*, Victoria Police legislation, Crimes Act reform, personal safety improvements (including a Serious Sex Offenders Bill), intervention orders and sentencing reforms, consumer affairs legislation reforms, credit laws reform, gaming reform (including gambling licenses and amendments relating to responsible gambling and racing)
- **Environment – climate change, water and the natural environment.** Implement environmental programs
- **Legislative and Regulatory Reform – reducing red tape and strengthening accountability.** The above-mentioned reforms, gaming and occupational health and safety reforms and implementing COAG-led regulatory reform harmonisation program for credit laws.

*Melbourne @ 5 Million
Released: 2008*

Planning policy directions, in response to recent growth projections that Melbourne's population will reach five million before 2030. This builds on two documents: *Melbourne 2030*, a 30-year plan to manage the growth and development of metropolitan and surrounding areas and *Beyond 5 Million*, explaining the Victorian Government's vision for growth in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

Safety agenda

The Way Ahead Strategic Plan 2008–13 Released: 2008

The Plan provides strategic direction for Victoria Police over the next five years, with a focus on connecting with the community. By upholding the rights of every individual and maintaining law and order, Victoria Police contributes to a more just and socially cohesive community. Crime reduction, public safety and road safety are key priorities of *The Way Ahead*.

Arrive Alive 2008–17 Released: 2008

A 10-year road safety strategy designed to reduce road trauma, deliver further major improvements to the road transport system, and improve safety for all Victorian road users. The Department of Justice and its agencies have particular responsibility for reducing unsafe behaviour by road users, tackling areas such as speeding, drink driving, fatigued driving and driver distraction.

Victoria's Alcohol Action Plan 2008–13 Released: 2008

Strategies aimed at preventing and reducing the harm associated with alcohol misuse in Victoria. The Plan contains over 35 actions across the areas of education, health, regulation, compliance and enforcement. The Plan identifies specific immediate actions and establishes a long-term framework for change, involving government, stakeholders and the wider community. Work continues across government to build upon these initial responses, with a focus on improving understanding of the drivers of alcohol related harm and taking a strategic approach to addressing fundamental underlying societal attitudes, and service and regulatory frameworks to improve prevention and harm minimisation strategies.

Taking Action on Problem Gambling Released: 2006

This broad framework guides the development and implementation of the five year strategy to combat problem gambling in Victoria. The government is committed to building a safer gambling environment and improve treatment services for problem gamblers and their families.

Racing in Victoria Leading the Field Released: 2006

Documents the government's contribution to the Victorian racing industry and defines the future direction of the government's review program. It also acknowledges the partnership between the Victorian Government and Victoria's racing industry, as well as the economic, social and cultural contribution made by the racing industry to Victorian communities.

Rights agenda

A Fairer Victoria Released: 2005–09

This social policy action plan addresses disadvantage and promotes inclusion and participation:

- improve access to vital services
- reduce barriers to opportunity
- strengthen assistance for disadvantaged groups
- ensure that people get the help they need at critical times.

A range of initiatives provide affordable, accessible justice services that respond to the needs of disadvantaged groups and help create a more equitable, inclusive society.

Attorney General's Justice Statement 2 Released: 2008

Reforms to reduce the cost of justice, create a unified and engaged court system and promote appropriate dispute resolution. It builds on *Justice Statement 1, New Directions for the Victorian Justice System 2004–2014*, with an emphasis on modernising the justice system – ensuring it remains flexible and responsive to change – and safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable.

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Released: 2006

An agreed set of human rights, freedoms and responsibilities, which government departments and public bodies must observe when creating laws, setting policies and providing services.

Victims' Charter Released: 2006

The Victims' Charter sets out the principles criminal justice agencies must follow in their dealings with victims of crime. As a result, victims of crime can at all times expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity by the police, the Office of Public Prosecutions and victims support services.

Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement – Phase 2 Released: 2006

The government's partnership with the Koori community to tackle disadvantage and inequity, reduce Koori contact with the criminal justice system, and improve the justice process for Indigenous Victorians. Phase 1 was launched in 2000, making important progress toward better justice outcomes for the Koori community. After a 2004 review, the *Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement Phase 2 (AJA2)* was released. Phase 2 outlines six overall strategies and a series of specific initiatives, to be delivered over four years.

Criminal justice system Criminal justice system Criminal justice system Criminal justice system

The criminal justice system brings together a number of agencies to prevent, detect and prosecute crimes, support victims of crime, dispense justice and place offenders in correctional programs.

Outcome

Community safety and crime reduction

Goals

Reduced incidence and fear of crime

Increased support for victims of crime

Improved timeliness within courts

Reduced re-entry of offenders into the correctional system

Increased protection for children from known offenders

Increased community confidence that the justice system is dealing with crime

System elements

Crime prevention and early intervention

Law reform

Police assistance

Victim support

Detection and investigation of crime

Suitability checks

Prosecution of offenders

Provision of legal aid

Sentencing and diversion

Offender supervision and rehabilitation

Priorities

Defendants with complex needs

Develop an integrated model for addressing disadvantage in the criminal justice system, using problem solving courts in suburban and regional locations, across all jurisdictions.

Pilot projects show that problem solving courts tackle the causes of crime, helping to reduce re-offending and build stronger communities.

Justice for refugees

Implement the *Justice for Refugees* initiative, to improve the responsiveness and accessibility of Justice services for refugees.

Some refugee communities in Victoria are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Cultural, literacy and language barriers present particular challenges for our legal system.

Demand for correctional services

Continue to develop and refine the Corrections Victoria *Prison Facilities Master Plan* to deal with increasing prisoner numbers, including plans for a new prison facility in Ararat. Prepare legislation to extend home detention; maintain the diversion policy, and initiatives to reduce recidivism.

Forecasts of prisoner numbers project increased demand over the next five years, requiring additional facilities.

Sex offender management

Implement the new legislative scheme for post-sentence supervision and detention of high risk sex offenders.

Sex offenders with a high risk of re-offending require ongoing assessment, management and supervision.

Justice health issues

Integrate and coordinate forensic health services across Police, Courts and Corrections, moving to a lead service provider model (consortium). Develop a framework for meeting the needs of prisoners with mental health issues, an intellectual disability or other cognitive impairments.

Mental health and other health issues affect a significant proportion of people in the criminal justice system. There is a need for more tailored responses and for earlier intervention.

Victim-centered justice

Implement a range of initiatives to:

- enhance assistance services such as the Victims' Register, the Victims of Crime Helpline and victims compensation
- ensure the Child Witness Service (CWS) is responsive to increased demand
- give victims a greater role in the justice process, through initiatives such as victim impact statements and restorative justice conferencing.

Further work will embed the Victims' Charter principles into practice, empower victims and improve their experiences in the justice system.

Law reform

Reform the key areas of criminal law – evidence, procedures, offences and investigative power.

New legislation will consolidate and streamline criminal law procedures, reducing court delays.

Regulation and enforcement system

Regulation and enforcement system

Regulation and enforcement system

Regulation and enforcement system

The regulation and enforcement system uses regulatory frameworks and other approaches to protect the community and encourage people and businesses to behave responsibly.

Outcomes

Consumer empowerment and protection

Responsible business and citizen conduct

Goals

Increased consumer awareness

Reduced levels of harmful debt

Reduced gambling-related harm

Reduced alcohol-related social disorder

Fewer road fatalities and serious injuries

Increased compliance with consumer, gambling, liquor, road safety and legal regulations

System elements

Community education and information

Licensing and registration

Business regulation

Gambling regulation

Consumer and problem gambling support

Racing industry support

Infringement management and enforcement

Dispute resolution

Priorities

Modernising consumer protection

Continue to lead and participate in the national reform agenda and pursue the modernisation of the legislative regime.

A harmonised national consumer protection law effectively protects consumer interests and applies equally to all businesses in Australia. High level Commonwealth laws and successful transition arrangements will be in place.

Residential accommodation

Expand the residential accommodation conciliation service and make regulatory changes where required to address ongoing problems. The comprehensive program of work will include addressing compliance, especially in rooming houses, ensuring students have access to fair and equitable accommodation and implementing residential parks policy and legislation changes.

An integrated approach to residential accommodation policy and services across Consumer Affairs Victoria will ensure disputes are resolved quicker and more cost effectively. Rooming house operators and commercial providers of student accommodation will comply with the law and residential parks accommodation will be more effectively managed.

Regulatory burden

Support the Whole-of-Victorian-Government initiative to reduce the administrative burden of regulation.

The Victorian Government is committed to reducing the administrative burden of Victorian regulation by 15 per cent over three years and 25 per cent over five years from 1 July 2006.

Asset confiscation

Ensure effective seizure of major crime assets, in line with the government's review of the asset confiscation regime (part of its organised crime strategy).

The Asset Confiscation Scheme ensures criminals do not profit from crime.

Financial hardship

Review provision of justice services, in light of increasing demand brought on by the current economic downturn. Work collaboratively across Justice to coordinate financial counselling and other services addressing financial hardship.

Rising levels of household debt, combined with the current global financial crisis, are placing pressure on consumers who may rely increasingly on government services. A comprehensive response to the State Services Authority's review into financial counselling programs is also a key focus for 2009–10.

Problem gambling

Implement initiatives in the government's five year strategy *Taking Action on Problem Gambling*, with a focus in 2009–10 on building better treatment services and improved, coordinated community education strategies. A three year longitudinal study that follows gamblers will provide significant data and analysis to assist policy makers and service providers.

Problem gambling is a complex social phenomenon, influenced by how people use gambling products and their life experiences. Consequently, the justice response needs to be comprehensive and integrated with other service providers.

Racing industry sustainability

Maintain a regulatory environment that supports a sustainable racing industry in a rapidly changing and competitive environment; both nationally and internationally. Implement major government initiatives, including the response to the 2008 review of integrity policies for horse, harness and greyhound racing. Establish the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund, an \$86 million capital works program to support regional racing infrastructure.

Horse, harness and greyhound racing generate significant economic activity and employment, particularly in regional Victoria.

Infringements management

Improve infringements management, through more accurate forecasting of infringement volumes; a more efficient and effective Infringements Court; new sanctions and measures to increase early payment of fines and a targeted debt management strategy.

Effective infringements management will lead to greater compliance with court orders and recovery of more outstanding fines.

Gambling regulation

Develop an allocation process and transitional policy for the State's major commercial gambling licenses post-2012, including new arrangements for electronic gaming machine, wagering and Keno licences.

Sweeping changes to the structure of the gaming industry in Victoria were announced by the government in April 2008.

Road safety

Develop and commence implementation of justice-related aspects of *Arrive Alive 2008-2017*, including refining new technologies associated with road safety cameras, upgrading existing technologies and improving our partnership with other road safety organisations.

The reduction in road deaths and injury rates is showing signs of stabilising, presenting a challenge to achieve further reductions.

Domestic building

Introduce innovative approaches to dealing with building disputes and assist those rebuilding after the Victorian bushfires. Strengthen relationships with key industry organisations and other regulators.

Enhanced consumer protection will minimise the impact on consumers of registered building practitioners becoming insolvent, or no longer able to practice, and provide early conciliation of building disputes including onsite conciliation. Regulation across the industry will be more effective.

Emergency services system Emergency services system Emergency services system Emergency services system

The emergency services system is the network of agencies, departments and organisations that work with the community to improve emergency prevention, preparedness, responses and recovery.

Outcome

Integrated 'all hazards-all agencies' community focused emergency management, with 'all hazards-all agencies'

Goals

Fewer deaths and serious injuries resulting from emergency events

Increased volunteer capacity

Decreased emergency response times

Minimised impact of emergencies

Increased active community participation in achieving safety

outcomes

System elements

Coordinated emergency management arrangements

Integrated planning response and recovery

Community involvement

Priorities

Informed and resilient communities

Working with emergency services organisations, deliver a long term intensive bushfire education and awareness campaign commencing before the 2009–10 fire season. Engage more closely with local communities to improve their preparedness for the coming and future seasons. Assist residents to assess the defendability of their homes and risks they face in developing their individual bushfire plans. Pilot township protection plans in some high risk locations in consultation with the community. Identify neighbourhood safer places as an additional option for people unable to remain in a prepared home or caught in the open during a fire.

The scale of the 7 February 2009 bushfires was unprecedented. By the time the fires were contained, 173 people had lost their lives and many others were seriously injured. In total, 78 communities and 430,000 hectares of land were seriously affected.

Improved warnings to the community

Improve the quality, clarity and timeliness of warnings to communities threatened, or likely to be affected by bushfires. Increase the emphasis on leaving early as the safest option on days of extreme fire danger.

A more informed community will be better placed to make decisions that affect their welfare.

Increased operational capability

Enhance intelligence gathering both to guide operational planning and better inform the community of the threat that fires may pose. Provide additional surge capacity for 000 call taking and dispatch on extreme fire days. Upgrade the facilities and resourcing of strategically located Incident Control Centres across the State and pre-form incident management teams on forecast high risk days. Strengthen communication flows and management arrangements from the fire-ground through to the incident control, regional and state levels.

Coordinated emergency services communications and improved information are essential components of an emergency response.

Climate change

Develop strategies to respond to more extreme weather events, including fires, floods, storms and drought including enhancing our emergency response capability, providing additional community education and engagement activities and retaining and valuing our volunteers.

Climate change is impacting on emergency services capacity and on the rural economy which underpins volunteerism.

Sustainability of the volunteer base

Establish a sector-wide volunteer attraction, retention and recognition strategy, to ensure Victoria has enough appropriately skilled volunteers.

Volunteers are an essential part of emergency services provision in Victoria, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Sector leadership

Revitalise the Victorian Emergency Management Council (VEMC) to provide strategic direction, leadership and integration of the emergency services sector, including sector-wide use of an agreed integrated emergency services framework.

An integrated approach to emergency management and planning will help ensure that these services are well placed to respond to future challenges.

Civil justice system Civil justice system Civil justice system Civil justice system

The civil justice system is a network of courts and legal processes that provides a just and accessible means of resolving civil disputes at the earliest opportunity. It enforces, restores and protects private and personal rights.

Outcomes

Fair and efficient dispute resolution

Human rights protection

Goals

Increased awareness of legal and civil rights

Increased diversion to appropriate dispute resolution

Improved timeliness within courts

Reduced levels of unlawful discrimination

System elements

Education and awareness raising

Law reform

Provision of legal advice and information

Advocacy and guardianship

Dispute resolution

Case management

Priorities

Law reform

Implement civil procedure reforms as recommended in *Justice Statement 2* and consistent with the Victorian Law Reform Commission's Civil Justice Review.

A landmark report by the Victorian Law Reform Commission sets the agenda for comprehensive reform of civil procedure, including incentives for resolving disputes before going to court.

Appropriate dispute resolution (ADR)

Improve dispute resolution services by establishing an ADR Directorate, with judge-led ADR in the higher courts, referring appropriate Intervention Order applications to mediation and non-court dispute resolution.

Expanded ADR capacity in Victoria will provide the community, business and industry with better options for resolving disputes quickly and cheaply.

Human rights and social policy reform

Continue to promote awareness of the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*, within the public sector and the broader community. Contribute to the government's social policy reform agenda, including the implementation of the equal opportunity reforms and assisted reproductive technology reforms as well as the review of the *Guardianship and Administration Act 1986*.

The government continues to address social disadvantage and help Victorians reach their full potential by ensuring that those who experience disadvantage are not unfairly discriminated against and excluded from opportunities that others take for granted. The government is also ensuring that its own policies and procedures are respectful of human rights.

Changing perceptions of justice

Respond to changing community needs and values, by broadening the application of restorative justice, monitoring and reporting on Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC) initiatives and strengthening community engagement activities by courts and tribunals. Continue to promote informed community debate on sentencing issues, through the Sentencing Advisory Council.

The Victorian community expects that justice services are accessible across Victoria and give recognition to the diverse nature of our community's makeup.

Court modernisation and reform of the legal profession

Make progress in modernising court administration, including implementing the *Magistrates' Court New Directions 2008–2011* program. Manage Panel arrangements for the provision of legal services to government and participate in the National Legal Profession Project, which has been designed to ensure a consistent approach to the regulation of the legal profession.

The traditional court structure, in which each jurisdiction looked after its own business, has become increasingly outdated. Harmonising structures and processes delivers many benefits.

Corporate and strategic support system Corporate and strategic support system Corporate and strategic support system Corporate and strategic support system

The corporate and strategic support system includes the management guidelines, policies and procedures that support the efficient and effective operation of the other four justice systems.

Outcomes

Organisational sustainability

Goals

Effective cross-portfolio governance, coordination and development

Responsive and cost effective corporate support services

Effective attraction and retention of staff

Increase in efficient and productive use of departmental resources

System elements

Strategy and planning

Workforce management and industrial relations

Financial management

Information and communications technology management

Stakeholder engagement

Asset management

Communications and issues management

Risk management

Environmental management

Priorities

Greening Justice

Identify issues and solutions for a strategic approach towards renewable and mainstream energy efficiency.

As the impact of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere is increasingly understood, the need to develop an action plan for reducing the carbon footprint of justice operations becomes more urgent.

Regional service delivery

Continue to support the department's regional management structure which came into effect on 1 July 2009 to increase the justice 'voice' and visible presence in each region.

Public administration reforms and increased citizen expectations for service integration and engagement have resulted in a regional management structure for the delivery of justice services. The new structure also addresses population growth and improving access to justice services.

Data and analytical capability

Build data and modelling capabilities and extend strategic analysis to better inform policy. Improve data quality in corporate systems to aid planning and performance reporting.

The rise of whole-of-government approaches dealing with increasingly complex issues requires a stronger evidence base in justice administration. An Innovation and Strategy Unit was created within the department in late 2008, to lead and broadcast thinking on critical and strategic areas of interest to the Justice Portfolio and to build this evidence base.

Infrastructure investment

Establish additional Justice Service Centres, increase prison capacity, increase the capacity and security of the courts, and continue to improve policing facilities. Co-locate agencies and business units wherever appropriate and contribute to whole-of-government shared facility, property and fleet management services.

Increases in operational efficiency and security can be gained by ensuring that infrastructure is fit-for-purpose and opportunities for co-location and shared services are fully exploited.

Leveraging new technology

Continue to build a robust, sophisticated and modern technology platform that builds internal capabilities and makes productive use of our technology assets.

Opportunities exist to further leverage new technology advances within the department, improve connections between business units, extend the delivery of services, and build innovation and data analysis capabilities

