



Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

Inquiry: Inquiry into anti-LGBTIQ+ hate crimes in Victoria

Hearing date: 25 June 2026

Question taken on notice

Directed to: Grindr

Received date: July 5th 2026

Response date: July 13, 2026

1. Michael GALEA, page 4

Question Asked:

Would you be happy to provide to the committee on notice the stats for the exact number of reports by each Australian jurisdiction over the past two years through this service, just to give us a bit of a broader visual picture?

Priyanka PURKAYASTHA: Yes.

Joe HACK: Yes, we would be happy to check on that and see if we are able to provide that for you.

Grindr Response:

Grindr receives, manages and responds to law enforcement requests through Kodex, a dedicated law enforcement request platform that Grindr onboarded in March 2025. Structured, country-level data is therefore available from that point forward. Prior to Kodex, requests were handled through other channels and are not captured in a single, consistent system, so comparable records for the earlier part of the two-year period referenced by the Committee are not available. The figures below cover 1 March 2025 to 9 July 2026 (the date on which our team compiled the data for this request).

Requests received through Kodex fall into three categories: records requests (formal legal-process requests for user information, such as subpoenas, court orders and emergency disclosure requests); preservation requests (requests to preserve account data pending legal process); and inquiries (general enquiries from law enforcement that do not seek the production of user data). Over this period, Grindr received 141 requests from Australian law enforcement and government agencies, 43 of which were from Victoria.

2. **Ann-Marie HERMANS, page 7**

Question Asked:

I missed out on some of the answers to that, that is all. I would not mind, if it is possible, to be sent something in writing, if you do not mind, on what you are doing to protect young people and how you go about it. Once you find that this is an under-age person, what do you do, and how many cases, at least in Victoria, have you already uncovered, and what have you done about it? If that is possible, just because it froze and I could not hear your responses. I am so sorry...

Joe HACK: I was just going to say we would be happy to provide for you in writing just an explanation of what our tools are, what our policies are, how they work and, as you mentioned, if there have been any recent cases in Victoria.

Ann-Marie HERMANS: And what you have done about it. Thank you.

Grindr Response:

Grindr is an adults-only platform. Preventing access by anyone under 18 is a core safety priority, and we have built multiple layers of safeguards to support this.

In Australia, Grindr introduced age assurance in December 2025 in compliance with the Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024. Users cannot access the platform without first completing this process. Our age assurance solution uses facial age estimation technology (specifically FaceTec's 3D biometric system) to verify that a user is an adult before they can create or access an account. Users who do not pass facial age estimation are directed to a secondary pathway requiring a government-issued photo ID, reviewed by our team.

We recognise that no single verification step is foolproof, which is why we apply ongoing safeguards after account creation. These include a combination of automated and proactive detection systems, content moderation, and human review. Our systems monitor for behavioural signals that may indicate underage access, including signals from chat content and image uploads, and our Trust & Safety team reviews flagged accounts around the clock. These systems are continuously updated as new behaviors and risks emerge.

Users can also report suspected underage accounts directly within the app. These reports are treated as a high-priority category and are reviewed by trained human moderators who assess the account for concrete evidence of the user being a minor. When an account is confirmed as belonging to an underage user, it is removed promptly. We apply a device-level ban, which

prevents the same device from being used to create new accounts. Where there are signs of grooming, exploitation, or sexual content involving a minor, we escalate the matter internally and review related accounts and activity.

Where a case meets legal reporting thresholds, we comply with our external reporting obligations — including reporting to the U.S. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) via the CyberTipline, as required under applicable law. Not all underage cases meet that threshold; the obligation to report depends on the specific facts of the case and the applicable legal standard for CSAM reporting.

Please refer to our response to Question 5 below for data and additional information.

3. **Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO, page 7**

Question Asked:

The example I want to use is Equality Australia, who came before us yesterday and were calling for the ability to develop binding or authoritative practice guidelines particularly tailored to relevant settings in relation to social media platforms complying with and clarifying the duty that is required in practice. Is this something that Grindr supports?

Joe HACK: I would need to learn more before I could comment on that. I am sorry, I am just not terribly familiar with that particular position.

Anasina GRAY-BARBERIO: No worries. Is that something you could take on notice after you have had time to explore that?

Joe HACK: Yes, we would be happy to look at it.

Grindr Response:

Grindr has considered the issue raised by Equality Australia regarding binding or authoritative practice guidelines for digital platforms.

We support clear, practical, and risk-based safety expectations for online services, including dating apps. Platforms should have appropriate systems, policies, and reporting pathways in place to reduce misuse and respond to serious harm. In Australia, Grindr already gives effect to these expectations as a participant in the Australian Online Dating Code of Practice, a co-regulatory industry code administered through an Industry Working Group and overseen by eSafety. Grindr maintains safety systems, policies, and reports annually on its compliance as part of that.

In Grindr's experience, this framework is establishing meaningful,

industry-wide safety expectations while remaining sufficiently flexible to reflect the different services and risk profiles it covers. It is also subject to ongoing review in consultation with the government.

Should the government nonetheless decide to introduce binding requirements, Grindr would be open to engaging constructively on further work to clarify such requirements and what a digital duty of care means in practice, provided that such guidance is:

- tailored to the type of service and its risk profile;
- clear and operationally workable;
- consistent with privacy, data protection, and law enforcement requirements;
- sensitive to the specific safety needs of LGBTQIA+ users, including privacy, discretion, and the risk of outing; and
- developed through consultation with platforms, regulators, law enforcement, and LGBTQIA+ community organizations.

For Grindr, it is particularly important that any safety framework recognizes the unique context of LGBTQIA+ dating services. Measures that may appear straightforward in other settings — such as identity verification or public verification signals — can introduce additional risks for users who are not out, are discreet, or may face stigma, discrimination, or harm if their identity or use of the service is exposed.

For this reason, we would welcome guidance that is risk-based and outcomes-focused, rather than a one-size-fits-all model. The strongest framework would set clear expectations around user safety, reporting, escalation, law enforcement cooperation, transparency, and risk mitigation, while allowing platforms to meet those expectations in ways appropriate to their users and service design.

Grindr would be willing to engage constructively with the Victorian Government, the eSafety Commissioner, Equality Australia, Q+Law, and other relevant stakeholders as any such guidance is developed.

4. Aiv PUGLIELLI, pages 10-11

Question Asked:

Can I ask, given that: are you able to come back to us? You know, you have noted that you are updating your systems over time based on what you learn. Can you come back to us with an exhaustive list of what updates you have undertaken since the more recent publicly reported attacks in Victoria have occurred, say, over the last three years?

Joe HACK: Yes, we would be happy to provide the committee with a written outline of what our safety practices and protocols are, as well as the tools that are available to users.

Grindr Response:

Over the last three years, Grindr has made a number of Trust & Safety investments and product, policy, and operational updates that apply to users in Victoria and are relevant to the risks discussed in the inquiry. Many of these changes were implemented globally or across Australia, including in Victoria, because the safety issues raised by the Committee reflect broader online-to-offline harm patterns that can affect LGBTQIA+ users in different locations.

Key updates include:

1. **Expanded Trust & Safety investment and capacity:** Grindr has significantly increased its investment in Trust & Safety, including growing the team supporting this work. This has strengthened our policy, moderation, detection, escalation handling, law enforcement response, and safety operations across the platform.
2. **Risk-based policy and enforcement framework:** Grindr has introduced a more risk-based approach to policy enforcement. This allows us to distinguish between lower-risk conduct that may be better addressed through warnings, education, or user correction, and higher-risk conduct that requires stronger enforcement like device level ban. The goal is to intervene earlier where possible, give users clearer signals about unacceptable behavior, and reserve the strongest enforcement for more serious or harmful conduct.
3. **Dedicated reporting pathway for serious in-person incidents:** Grindr has created a direct reporting pathway for serious in-person incidents. Users can report serious offline harm or immediate safety concerns through in-app reporting and Help Center channels. These reports are routed to a high-priority escalation pathway and reviewed by trained specialists, rather than being handled as ordinary moderation tickets or with automation.

4. **Proactive and reactive Safety messaging:** Grindr has deployed safety messaging in Victoria and elsewhere in Australia to warn users about in-person safety risks and remind them of practical precautions. These messages have included guidance around staying in-app until comfortable, using video chat or other trust-building tools before meeting, meeting in public, telling someone trusted where they are going, and reporting suspicious or harmful behavior. In some cases, these have been developed in partnership with local authorities (Victoria Police) or organizations like ACON or Meridian.
5. **In-depth Help Center resources:** Grindr has continued to expand user-facing safety resources, including meeting safety guidance, reporting guidance, and broader security resources. Including detailed and holistic guides [like this](#), built in partnership with LGBTQIA+ organizations.
6. **Age assurance in Australia:** Grindr launched age assurance in Australia to help verify that users are over 18 before accessing the platform. This is a significant safety update for an adults-only service and is supported by additional enforcement steps when underage activity is detected, including account and device level bans.
7. **Product tools that support user confidence before meeting:** Grindr has continued to support tools that help users make more informed decisions before meeting in person, including video calling and Taken on Grindr. Taken on Grindr allows users to send a photo taken in-app with a watermark, helping provide an additional signal of authenticity during conversations.
8. **Spam, scam, and abuse prevention improvements:** Grindr has continued to invest in proactive systems and vendor partnerships that help detect and reduce spam, scam, bot, and other abusive behavior. This includes technical controls at account creation and ongoing detection work designed to identify suspicious or harmful activity before it reaches users at scale.
9. **Law enforcement cooperation through Kodex:** Grindr continues to support Australian law enforcement through Kodex, our dedicated law enforcement request portal. This allows law enforcement to submit requests through a structured process and helps Grindr respond to valid legal processes more efficiently. Grindr has also engaged with law enforcement to better understand off-platform harm patterns and improve internal safety responses.

Overall, these updates reflect a layered safety approach. No single tool or intervention can prevent all online-to-offline harm, particularly where determined bad actors misuse online platforms, move users off-platform, or engage in offline violence. Grindr's approach is to reduce misuse where we

can, give users clearer safety tools and reporting pathways, escalate serious harm quickly, support law enforcement through appropriate legal process, and continue improving our safety systems based on emerging risks.

5. **Ann-Marie HERMANS, page 12**

Question Asked:

I just wondered, in terms of your data and the under-age usage, what percentage you would say from our state or from our nation appear to be under-age young people that are trying to access and pose as people who are perhaps older – or maybe they are not trying to pose but they are under-age. In terms of the data that you are receiving, of those, what percentage are people wanting to commit acts of criminal intent and violence against the LGBTIQ community?

Joe HACK: Priyanka, do you want to take that one?

Priyanka PURKAYASTHA: Yes. Firstly on numbers, we will have to come back to you on the exact numbers and percentage of what this breakdown looks like. But based on what I have already observed in our earlier numbers check, we are seeing a significant drop in under-age user activity on the platform since the introduction of the age assurance solutions in December. But obviously there will still be folks who are finding ways to evade it.

Ann-Marie HERMANS: What is a drop? What are we looking at? What percentage? ...

Priyanka PURKAYASTHA: I will follow up with more details on what exactly that drop looks like and what that number is.

Grindr Response:

Grindr reviewed available data for Australia and Victoria to respond to the Committee's question regarding underage activity and the impact of age assurance.

The data shows a reduction in the number of underage profiles detected on Grindr following our introduction of age assurance in Australia in December 2025. Looking at underage profiles identified through moderation (excluding age-verification gate bans), the monthly rate of underage detection decreased from 27.2 to 12.3 per 10,000 monthly active profiles in Australia — a reduction of approximately 55%. In Victoria, the rate decreased from 22.1 to 10.1 per 10,000 monthly active profiles, a reduction of approximately 54%. These figures compare a pre-launch period (August–November 2025) with a post-launch period (December 2025–June 2026). We note that this is a period-over-period

comparison and the monthly data show the decline building over the first half of 2026 rather than as an immediate step-change at launch.

In relation to the Committee's question on criminal intent or violence against the LGBTQIA+ community, Grindr's data does not allow for a definitive assessment to infer criminal intent based on account activity alone. Based on available safety signals, no meaningful link was identified between underage accounts and indicators of criminal intent or violence.

Based on current data, Approximately 1.8% of underage accounts in Australia and 1.4% in Victoria were also flagged for hate or harassment-related conduct (as the accused party). A small number of the underage bans were linked to other profiles banned for violence-related language (1.47% in Australia and 0.48% in Victoria). These are general conduct signals and do not constitute confirmation of criminal intent or targeting of the LGBTQIA+ community.

There are important limitations to this analysis. Hate and harassment signals cannot be reliably attributed to homophobia or transphobia, and the violence-language analysis is based on a scan of standardized moderation comments. Accordingly, Grindr does not consider this data sufficient to quantify or characterize underage accounts as seeking to commit violence against the LGBTQIA+ community.