



Media release

Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

Technology driving a rise in anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crimes

Technology platforms, including dating apps and social media, are being used to facilitate an increase in criminal behaviour against LGBTQIA+ Victorians, a report tabled in the Legislative Council today has found.

The Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee inquired into anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crimes in Victoria, prompted by a concerning rise in targeted attacks.

The inquiry examined incidents in which online dating applications were used to lure predominantly gay and bisexual men to public locations, where they were assaulted, robbed and, in some cases, filmed and shared on social media. Evidence received by the Committee showed many of these attacks were carried out by young men, including some as young as 13 years old.

Committee Chair Joe McCracken said the inquiry highlighted the serious impact of hate-motivated offending and the need for a coordinated response across policing, the justice system, education and online platforms.

"The attacks uncovered through this inquiry are appalling and completely unacceptable. Every Victorian deserves to feel safe and respected, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics," he said.

Between January 2024 and October 2025, Victoria Police recorded 95 app-facilitated offences targeting members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

The Committee heard that the true extent of anti-LGBTQIA+ hate crime may be significantly higher, with many victims reluctant to report incidents due to concerns about how they will be treated or whether their complaints will be acted upon.

The inquiry also found that there is currently no nationally consistent definition of a hate crime in Australia, creating challenges for understanding, recording and responding to this form of offending.

The report recommends the Victorian Government advocate to the Commonwealth Government for a nationally consistent definition.

The report makes a range of other recommendations aimed at strengthening responses to hate crime, including improvements to policing, victim support, justice system navigation, laws addressing hate-motivated offending and alternative approaches such as restorative justice.

The Committee also found that prevention must be a central part of Victoria's response.

The inquiry also examined the responsibilities of online dating platforms and identified opportunities to improve user safety, including stronger age and identity verification measures, enhanced reporting systems, clearer safety warnings and greater cooperation with law enforcement agencies.

"While dating app providers have taken steps to improve safety, there is more work to do to better protect users from harm," Mr McCracken said.

The report is available on the Parliament of Victoria [website](#).

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