

# Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Inquiry into the 2024-25 Financial and  
Performance Outcomes

**Emma Cassar PSM**

Secretary

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Thursday 27 November 2025



# Financial and operational overview (as at 30 June 2025)



**\$6.285 billion**

DJCS total (excluding Victoria Police) 2024-25 actual output cost



**11,096 FTE**

DJCS total workforce, including entities (full-time equivalent)



**8 capital initiatives**  
valued at over  
**\$110 million**

Completed DJCS infrastructure projects, including Victoria Police initiatives



**\$4.609 billion**

Victoria Police 2024-25 actual output cost



**21,332 FTE**

Victoria Police total workforce (full-time equivalent), including 15,909 FTE police and 1,462 FTE PSOs

# Department of Justice and Community Safety

## 2024-25 operations and achievements

Our vision is to deliver a trusted justice and community safety system that works together to build a just, safe and resilient Victoria.

The DJCS team works tirelessly, aligned to the Victorian public sector values, to deliver our services to the Victorian community.

In 2024-25, DJCS has delivered many Government priorities alongside our critical statutory functions, including:

- First Law Officer functions
- Continued the safe operations of adult and youth justice systems and sheriff duties
- Law reform development and implementation
- Coordination of Victoria's emergency arrangements, including implementation of reviews, inquiries and reform activities

The Department's achievements in 2024-25 are a testament to the dedicated and diverse workforce and volunteers who support its work.

# Community safety reforms in 2024-25



## Overview of law reforms

- The *Crimes Amendment (Performance Crime) Act 2025* introduced a new performance crime offence into the *Crimes Act*, which commenced on 20 August 2025. The offence criminalises the publication of material that draws attention to someone's own involvement in certain serious offences.
- The *Bail Amendment Act 2025* and *Bail Further Amendment Act 2025* have strengthened Victoria's bail laws to address the risks to community safety caused by repeat, high harm offending. All reforms – except those relating to the uplift provisions – have commenced.
- The *Justice Legislation Amendment (Anti-Vilification and Social Cohesion) Act 2025* protects more Victorians from hate and vilification. The criminal reforms commenced on 20 September 2025. The strengthened civil reforms will commence on 30 June 2026.
- The Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Bill 2025 protects customer-facing workers in these sectors from assault and abuse. The reforms will be introduced in 2025, with commencement also anticipated.
- The *Criminal Organisations Control Amendment Act 2024* strengthened police powers to prevent and disrupt serious organised crime by enhancing unlawful association powers, introducing a new serious crime prevention order scheme, and prohibiting the public display of gang colours. This commenced on 25 August 2025.



## Work to recruit and otherwise prepare the justice system

- Through 2024-25, the department progressed work to ensure system readiness for implementation of the Government's community safety reforms.
- This included increasing capacity across adult prisons and youth justice centres to respond to the increased numbers of alleged offenders being denied bail.



# Aboriginal Justice

## Key achievements in 2024-25

- **Aboriginal Justice Agreement:** The department continued to work in formal partnership with Aboriginal community to improve Aboriginal justice outcomes, including through the statewide Aboriginal Justice Forum and regional partnership structures.
- **Aboriginal Community Grants:** The department administered \$46.54 million in grant funding to improve justice outcomes for Victorian Aboriginal communities, with 96% of these grants allocated to Aboriginal community organisations.
- **Engagement with the Victorian Truth and Treaty Process:** The department continued fulsome engagement with the Yoorrook Justice Commission for its final year of inquiries and in Victoria's ongoing Treaty processes.
- **Stolen Generations Reparations Package:** As at 30 June 2025, 992 applications had been received in total and reparations payments of \$68.04 million had been made to 683 applicants.





# Emergency Management and Natural Disaster Recovery

## Key achievements in 2024-25

- **Response to emergencies:** The State Control Centre was activated above 'monitoring' level for 237 days in 2024-25 and coordinated the State's response to a number of major emergencies, including widespread storms in August and September 2024, and bushfires in the Grampians and Western Victoria in December 2024 and January 2025.
- **Continued support for flood recovery:** Emergency Recovery Victoria worked collaboratively with stakeholders across all levels of government and relevant agencies to coordinate emergency relief and recovery efforts in response to the October 2022 Victorian floods.
- **Delivery of emergency services facilities:** New fire stations have been delivered at Beaufort, Irymple and Pyalong. The Department also undertook advanced design and planning work for a number of Country Fire Authority, Victoria State Emergency Service and Life Saving Victoria facilities.
- **Strengthening communications capability within emergency management:** The Department's Emergency Management group, working with NSW, South Australia and the Australian Defence Force, delivered a successful trial for frontline personnel to switch between radio networks when responding to events across state borders.





# Corrections

## Key achievements in 2024-25

- **Men's prison system reform:** Improved the safety and efficiency of the men's prison system by, closing Dhurringile Prison, opening Western Plains Correctional Centre, and preparing for the end of G4S's contract to operate Port Phillip Prison.
- **Delivery of key initiatives from the Cultural Review:** Launched a suite of new strategies and frameworks to support *Safer Prisons*, *Safer People*, *Safer Communities*, including the 4-year Safer Prisons Strategy, which seeks to reduce incidents of physical occupational violence.
- **Secondary mental health services in custody:** Recommissioned secondary mental health services under the updated Healthcare Services Quality Framework 2025 and Service Specifications, to strengthen the assessment, treatment and management of people living with a significant mental illness.
- **Rehabilitation and Reintegration:** Received the 2024 Reducing Reoffending Award from the International Corrections and Prisons Association for the Inside to Outside Jobs Strategy.

As at 30 June 2025:

**6,596** People in prison

**8,322** People on Community Correction Orders

**5,975** People employed by DJCS in the corrections and justice services portfolio

**36.8%** People returning to prison within 2 years (lowest recorded result since 2016–17)



# Youth Justice

## Key achievements in 2024-25

- **Received Royal Assent of the *Youth Justice Act 2024*:** The legislation became Victoria's first standalone Act for the youth justice system.
- **Commenced an Electronic Monitoring and Enhanced Bail Supervision and Support Trial:** Providing courts with an extra tool to ensure those who are granted bail comply with their bail conditions, and to improve community safety.
- **Commenced an innovative community-based Aboriginal Family-Centred Service:** aimed at keeping children under 14 out of the justice system.
- **South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group:** The Expert Working Group continued work to clarify and address the drivers of South Sudanese Australian young people's involvement in the justice system. This is supported by the administration of \$1.3m in grants to South Sudanese Australian community-led organisations since its establishment.
- **Established a Council on Bail, Rehabilitation and Accountability:** In response to the small, but growing, cohort of young people involved in serious, repeat offending and having a disproportionate impact on community safety. The Council brings together senior decision makers to facilitate swift, effective action to respond to opportunities for change and improvement.

As at 30 June 2025:

**442**

Young people under community supervision

**142**

Young people in custody (remand and sentenced)

**699**

Youth Justice Workers employed by DJCS





# Community Safety and Victims



## Key achievements in 2024-25

### • **Launch of the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme:**

- The 2024-25 Budget provided \$71.85 million to the new Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS).
- The FAS commenced on 18 November 2024 and provides a trauma-informed approach to assessing applications for financial assistance from victims of crime.
- To 30 June 2025 the FAS received 8,009 applications.

### • **Launch of a new Youth Crime Prevention Program (YCPP) in Mildura:**

- Government provided \$0.35 million to deliver *Mallee Together: Supporting Our Young People* in Mildura to get young people engaged in school, gain employment and strengthen connections to their community.
- YCPP supports young people in 14 locations across Victoria and has been shown to reduce the rate and severity of offending.



# Police and Road Safety

## Key achievements in 2024-25

### Victoria Police

- **Operation Bastion:** Coordination of the policing response for *Land Forces 2024* – almost 1,800 police officers deployed daily to secure venues and protect attendees.
- **Operation Park:** Continued focus on maintaining social cohesion through community engagement and visible reassurance patrols.
- **Benalla Police Station:** New Police Station completed in February 2025, enhancing policing capacity in the region.
- **ePINS:** Allows members to create and serve infringement notices electronically via email or MMS, replacing a paper-based process.

### DJCS

- **Expansion of weapons search powers:** Amendments came into effect in March 2025 to enable Victoria Police to declare certain public places as 'designated areas' for up to 6 months (from 12 hours), in which police can conduct random weapons searches.
- **Establishment of the machete safe surrender scheme:** Installation of secure drop-off boxes commenced to support machete prohibition from 1 September 2025.
- **Expansion of eligibility for countering violent extremism early intervention programs:** Amendments came into effect in March 2025 to support individuals vulnerable to violent extremists and their families.
- **Fixed Road Safety Cameras:** All 35 new fixed road safety camera intersection sites have commenced enforcement, and the 2 new fixed point-to-point road safety camera networks have commenced construction.
- **Victoria's Road Safety Action Plan 2: Extending and Expanding the Distracted Driver and Seatbelt Camera Program,** to detect dangerous and distracted drivers such as illegal portable device use and seatbelt non-compliance.



# Casino, Gaming and Liquor, and Racing

## Key achievements in 2024-25

- **Backing Jobs in Victorian Racing initiative:** \$23 million in grant funding was provided to support 233 projects, including 212 projects in regional Victoria.
- **New funding arrangements for the Victorian Racing Industry (VRI):** The department finalised a new deed that provides funding certainty to the VRI for 10 years. The funding is primarily sourced from wagering taxes and licence revenue.
- **Gambling reforms and research priorities:**
  - Mandated venue gaming machine areas to close from 4am to 10am, to enforce breaks from gambling.
  - Established a framework for mandatory carded play and pre-commitment in the *Gambling Legislation Amendment (Pre-commitment and Carded Play) Act 2025* and began a trial in 43 venues in the Ballarat, Greater Dandenong and Monash local government areas, concluding on 30 November.
  - Launched a 3-year research strategy to build knowledge of gambling harm to inform program, policy, service delivery and campaign initiatives.
- **Tobacco business licensing scheme:** Developed the Tobacco Amendment (Tobacco Retailer and Wholesaler Licensing Scheme) Bill 2024 to establish a licensing scheme for tobacco retailers and wholesalers, regulate the lawful supply of tobacco products and create offences in relation to licensing. The scheme is now operating and will be enforced from 1 February 2026.
- **Liquor Control Victoria (LCV):** LCV processed 14,000 liquor licences over 30% faster compared to 2023-24, without compromising robust risk assessments. LCV also completed over 5,200 inspections across Victoria and recorded just under 300 infringements and prosecutions including \$385,000 in fines.

# Key legislation passed in 2024-25

- Youth Justice Act 2024
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Anti-Vilification and Social Cohesion) Act 2025
- Bail Amendment Act 2025
- Terrorism (Community Protection) and Control of Weapons Amendment Act 2025
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Committals) Act 2025
- Crimes Amendment (Performance Crime) Act 2025
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Act 2025
- Criminal Organisations Control Amendment Act 2024
- State Civil Liability (Police Informants) Act 2024
- Tobacco Amendment (Tobacco Retailer and Wholesaler Licensing Scheme) Act 2024
- Gambling Legislation Amendment Act 2025
- Gambling Legislation Amendment (Pre-commitment and Carded Play) Act 2025



# Key legislation developed in 2024-25

- Bail Further Amendment Act 2025
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Police and Other Matters) Bill 2025
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Family Violence, Stalking and Other Matters) Bill 2025
- Justice Legislation Amendment (Vicarious Liability for Child Abuse) Bill 2025
- Worker Screening Amendment (Strengthening the Working with Children Check) Bill 2025
- Crimes Amendment (Retail, Fast Food, Hospitality and Transport Worker Harm) Bill 2025
- Casino and Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2025
- Corrections Legislation Amendment Bill 2025





**Thank you.**

