

**PETITION**

**Number: 684**

**Sponsored by: Georgie Crozier MLC**

**Directed to: Minister for Corrections**

**Tabled on: 28 October 2025**

**Petition Grievance:** The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council that many current and former Police and Emergency Services members are suffering from post traumatic stress injury (PTSI). The science is irrefutable. Providing assistance dogs to many sufferers is a cost-effective means of alleviating many of the adverse effects of PTSI. A former police officer succumbed to PTSI after being shot in the head. The officer was provided with an assistance dog, Yogi. The officer's medication requirements reduced dramatically, vastly improving their general and mental health. Sourcing and training assistance dogs is expensive. New South Wales allows prisoners to work with dogs until they become fully trained working assistance dogs. In Victoria, at Tarrangower Prison, inmates train greyhounds to be assistance dogs. Benefits are twofold: inmates' rehabilitation is assisted by having the responsibility of caring for and training these dogs, giving them a sense of purpose and boosting their self-esteem and confidence and fully trained dogs are available. There is an urgent need to acquire and deliver assistance dogs to Police and Emergency Service workers suffering from PTSI. Substantial savings to the health system would be an additional benefit.

**Petition Action:** The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council call on the Government to immediately introduce an assistance dog acquisition and training program in selected prisons to provide assistance dogs to current and former Police and Emergency Service workers suffering from post traumatic stress injury (PTSI) and initiate funding to finance this program by adding one or two dollars to the cost of dog registrations across Victoria to be specifically reserved for this purpose.

**Reply:**

I firstly would like to acknowledge the important work of Victoria's current and former Emergency Service Workers and Victoria Police staff.

Tarrangower Prison supports the Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP). The program aims to rehabilitate ex-racing dogs through socialisation and basic training provided by the women in custody so that the Greyhounds are safe and ready to be adopted by members of the community. Prisoners at Tarrangower receive instruction and coaching

for caring and training the Greyhounds and basic training in animal behavioural skills from GAP staff.

The Beechworth Correctional Centre also has a relationship with the local dog's home where prisoners provide abandoned dogs with behavioural training to support them being adopted in the future. There are a finite number of kennels at each location to support these programs and minimum security prisons are the only suitable sites for programs involving prisoners training dogs.

More generally, the Victorian Government is committed to ensuring all Emergency Service Workers and Victoria Police members, current and former, have access to a wide range of mental health supports due to the risk of exposure to potentially traumatic events in the course of their work.

As part of the 2023-24 Victorian State Budget, the Government committed to providing \$4 million in funding for the Victoria Police BlueHub over four years. BlueHub is an initiative of The Police Association of Victoria (TPAV) that provides expert psychological assessment and treatment of trauma to police officers.

Victoria Police also offers a number of wellbeing services and programs to support current and former employees and their families. The Mental Health Centre of Excellence and Innovation leads the development of the Mentally Healthy Workplace Framework for the future delivery of mental and wellbeing initiatives. The Police Psychology Unit provides tailored support to specialist units to support the management of trauma exposure and psychological wellbeing. The Peer Support program consists of 850 trained peers across the organisation, trained to identify client needs and triage to clinical support.

Victoria Police provide a 24/7 critical incident and crisis support line. This service provides psychological first aid, ongoing support and risk management, including for symptoms outside the normal trauma response. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) also provides unlimited support to employees and family members with evidence-based therapy sessions.

Victoria Police also offers a number of wellbeing services and programs to support its veteran employees and their families, including access to Victoria Police's EAP, access to Blue Space (a website with information on mental health and wellbeing issues), and other services that may be of further assistance.

Independent charity, Police Veterans Victoria, also provides a range of supports to Police Veterans including counselling and coordination and clinical supervision of a Veteran Peer Support Program.

The Responder Assist is a Victorian State funded service that aims to improve the lives of emergency service workers through tailored mental health supports. The clinic is open to all Victorian emergency service workers, including those who are retired from service. Responder Assist offers training, research and support to mental health practitioners who treat emergency services personnel. More information can be found on their website via this link: [Home - Responder Assist](#)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Erdogan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC**

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation  
Minister for Corrections  
Minister for Youth Justice