

TPAV JOURNAL

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08 Secretary's Report



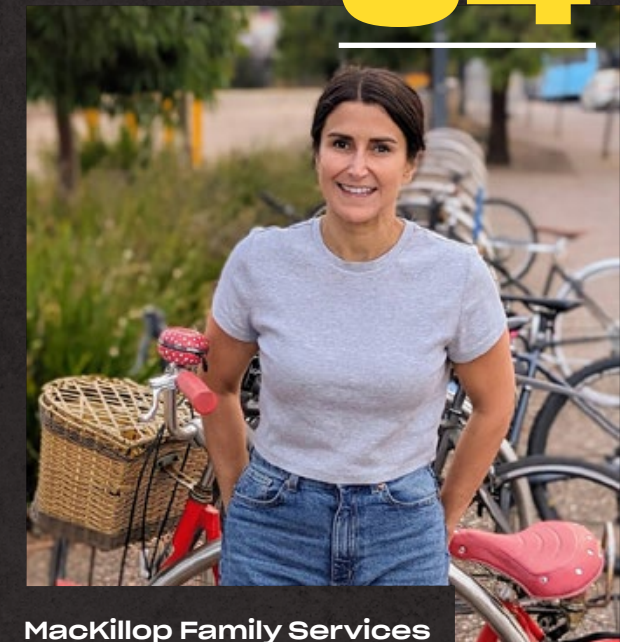
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MacKillop Family Services

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THE POLICE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA

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TPAV recognises the value PVV brings to our veteran community and encourage former members to join (there is no cost). Go to www.policeveteransvic.org.au

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Provides the opportunity for past and present women police to communicate, socialise, share friendships and support each other.
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Generation Next PG. 14

IN THIS ISSUE

Generation next

In this edition of *The Journal*, we shine a light on the next generation of Victorian police, coming to a station near you.

We speak to graduates from squads 7 and 8 about where they've come from, why they've chosen policing, their experiences in training and their career aspirations. We also delve into plans to streamline the academy training program and expand recruitment into regional areas to address high vacancy rates.

Shock value

Following TPAV's successful campaign to have all frontline police equipped with a Taser, we take a look inside the mammoth infrastructure and training

project now underway to make it happen. Frontline members from Springvale and Dandenong are among the first general duties members to be equipped with new taser 7s.

The Journal was there as they undertook a two-day course to learn how to use the new devices safely and effectively. We also provide an update on how the rollout is tracking and when the force aims to have it completed.

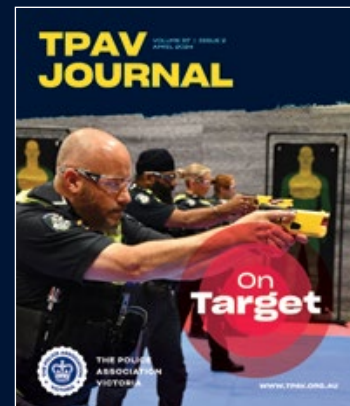
Honouring the highlights of our history

Last month we gathered to celebrate those who have made an extraordinary contribution to The Police Association over the course of its 107-year history. For the first time, the Life Members Dinner

was held in our new headquarters in Jolimont Street. As Secretary Wayne Gatt noted in his speech, many of the life members in the room had helped lay the foundations for the modern, purpose-built building they were being celebrated in. See inside for some highlights from the night.

Jump into Lakes

For those looking to get away in the Autumn and Winter months for some sightseeing and fun local attractions, The Police Association's holiday homes at Lakes Entrance offer a great and affordable option for couples and families. In this edition of *The Journal*, we take you through the region's attractions and the great local discounts on offer for TPAV members.



Cover image: A member goes through his paces during CED training at the Police Academy. *Picture: Marty Dixon*

Proud to see 50,000 police honoured by a grateful nation



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Karl David



This month marks 10 years since Her Majesty the Queen agreed to a change to the eligibility for the National Police Service Medal (NPSM), to extend eligible service back to 14 February 1975, the date on which the Australian Honours system was established.

This extension came almost three years after the initial announcement of the NPSM applying to eligible members who were still serving on or after 30 October 2008. Since the initial medals were presented in 2011, over 50,000 NPSMs have been awarded to current and former officers.

The establishment of this award and its later extension back to 1975, took a number of decades to be achieved and a number of past and present members had a significant hand in its development.

The Police Federation of Australia with the strong support of its state, territory and federal police association and union branches played the leading role in making this happen.

Our underpinning arguments for the awarding of a specific medal to sworn police officers, is that it offers a substantial acknowledgement of the

unique role that sworn police officers play in the preservation of peace, the protection of life and property and the maintenance of law and order throughout Australia and overseas.

The medal was ultimately awarded in "recognition for the unique contribution and significant commitment of those persons who have given ethical and diligent service as a sworn member of an Australian police service".

The medal is awarded to all sworn members of Australia's police forces upon completion of 15 years ethical and diligent service.

Importantly, we ensured that the medal's regulations included the ability to award the NPSM to members with a lesser period of service, if that service was terminated due to the member's death or to an impairment related to the discharge of their duties as a Constable of Police.

"The medal was ultimately awarded in recognition for the unique contribution and significant commitment of those persons who have given ethical and diligent service as a sworn member of an Australian police service."

The NPSM also sets an uncommonly high standard for its award and retention. Although a police officer may qualify for the award and be presented with same, should their service be later found to be unethical or not diligent, in an act either before or after the NPSM was awarded to them, then the award may be cancelled at any time on the advice of their Commissioner of Police.

It was also fitting that the award received bipartisan support from the major political parties, with the initial award being supported and announced in 2008 by the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd and the extension of the medal back to 1975, by the then Prime Minister Tony Abbott in April 2014.

The first 16 NPSMs were presented on 19 September 2011 in a ceremony at Parliament House Canberra, by the then Prime Minister, Julia Gillard. On that day, two members, one male and one female, from each of the state, territory and federal police forces, who were eligible for the medal and had been nominated by their respective jurisdiction, were honoured.

Since then, over 50,000 NPSMs have been presented to current and former officers recognising the special contribution police make to Australian communities. In an always challenging and often thankless job, recognition and respect of this kind for our dedicated members, is something the PFA will always fight for.

Honouring a distinguished life of service



At our Life Members Dinner last month, I paid tribute to one of our long-time life members, Ken Robertson QPM, who passed away in December.

Chief Superintendent Kenneth (Ken) Robertson QPM #11683, born 28 January 1931, passed away on 7 December 2023. Ken was married to Beverly, who passed away in 2021.

Two of Ken's children; son, Scott Robertson and daughter, Susanne Robertson, a former police officer who served for 32 years and remains an outside member of TPAV, were at the Life Members Dinner as we honoured their dad.

Ken joined the police force in 1953 and retired in 1987 as Chief Superintendent of Uniform Design and Development. Apparently, Ken duly informed his Chief Commissioner, Mick Miller, that he wasn't qualified as a clothing tailor to which Mick replied, "you're a Detective Ken, you'll work it out".

Ken was Dux of his Squad at DTS and later returned to be an instructor there too.

Ken also enjoyed a close friendship with Lionel Rose, Australia's first indigenous world champion boxer. Ken took Lionel under his care and even accompanied him to Japan before his retirement.

Ken became a Life Member at the 1977 Annual General Meeting for his exceptional and dedicated work on behalf of those charged in the Beach Inquiry, which also earned him a Queens Police Medal, a QPM.

To Susanne and Scott and your older sister Noelene, our condolences on the loss of your Dad.

He held a distinguished career and was a respected gentleman – for this you should be proud.

Susanne Robertson together with her father, the late father and TPAV Life Member, Ken Robertson at a TPAV function two years ago.

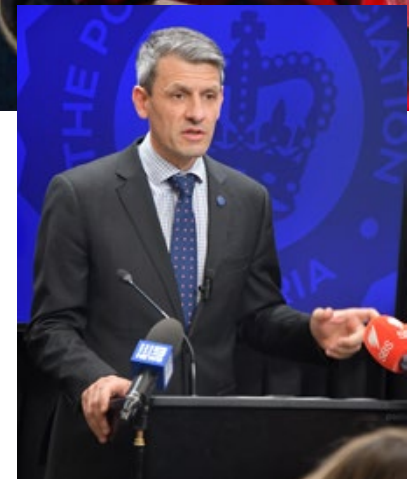




SECRETARY'S REPORT by Wayne Gatt

WHILE LEFT AND RIGHT FIGHT

MEMBERS IN THE MIDDLE CAN'T WIN



In 2019, we started a public conversation about the viability of policing the modern Melbourne protest – that is, a protest held in the Melbourne CBD that is designed to to draw in those with an alternate ideology, for an abusive and violent clash, with swathes of police caught in the middle as futile moderators.

Let me be clear, I'm talking about people who turn up to protests with the sole intent of causing disharmony and confrontation and baiting their ideological enemies, using the guise of democracy as a lure.

It's become a regular feature of Melbourne life, much to the chagrin of police and the general public. The outcome of these regular events is predictable and two-fold.

First, members are placed in a hopelessly unwinnable situation and at risk of injury, and second, they are criticised for their response – with claims from some critics that they were too lenient and from others that they were too forceful.

Rinse and repeat.

Five years ago, we called for consideration of a permit scheme like the one that currently operates in NSW, to ensure that these assemblies posed less risk of harm to others in the community.

The NSW model does not act like a veto. Police don't get to decide whether a



Secretary Wayne Gatt, writing about this issue in the 2019 February edition of the Journal.

given cause should or should not be given voice. But, it does ensure that parameters are put in place to make the planned assembly lawful, rather than the free-for-all our members regularly encounter in Melbourne.

We are pleased that Victoria Police has in recent times publicly echoed this sentiment.

While the government has cast aside our concerns, indicating that it has no intention of changing the status of protests in Victoria, it's only a matter of time before events like those witnessed at parliament house last month, dubbed an 'anti-trans rally', are repeated.

It is inevitable, given the nature of these events, that someone will get seriously injured and this initiative will be introduced.

It has to be.

The community is growing sick and tired of watching police act helplessly as onlookers to these frequent instances of unsanctioned chaos.

“

When TPAV reaches out to ESSS to seek support for a member or improvements for our membership more broadly, they are there for us, and more importantly, for you.

THANKING OUR SUPER STARS

I've got to admit, the longer my policing career spans, the more of a 'super' nerd I've become.

That's super in the 'superannuation' sense.

Working at the peak employee body for policing, it becomes abundantly clear just how essential superannuation planning is for police officers and PSOs.

Given the nature of our job and the demands it places on us, to be financially prepared for life after policing, we must plan for it almost as soon as our career begins.

ESSSuper staff help our members to administer their superannuation fund and assist hundreds of retiring and injured members each year manage their financial futures. They do this with a degree of personal care and protection that befits our profession.

When TPAV reaches out to ESSS to seek support for a member or improvements for our membership more broadly, they are there for us, and more importantly, for you.

I had a rare chance to thank those people collectively last month, as they gathered with their families in a relaxed



Jane Miller (Chief Executive Ambulance Victoria), Robbie Campo (CEO ESSSuper), Joan Fitzpatrick (Board President ESSSuper), Gavin Freeman (Fire Rescue Victoria Commissioner) and Wayne Gatt (TPAV Secretary).

environment to learn more about your profession and the work you do.

Organisations like ESSS and their people often only hear from us when things go wrong or something requires attention. Rarely, do they receive unprompted thanks for the hard work and commitment they show us each and every day.

It was nice to be able to do this, because whether you think about superannuation as much as I do (yet) or not, you will one day, and these are the people you will call on.

The closer your retirement gets, the more you will come to appreciate just how much is done by others throughout the whole of your career, to ensure your retirement aspirations are met.

MAKING SURE THAT CRIME DOESN'T PAY

It seems like a long time ago, but in a 2017 TPAV document called 'Your Safety: Our Priority' we outlined changes that we felt were required to support our members to combat organised crime.

Some seven years later, those recommendations have finally been acted on, with reforms announced last month by the government to close unexplained wealth loopholes.

The new unexplained wealth laws flip the onus on criminals to prove the wealth and assets they've obtained have come from lawful means and extends current legislation to capture assets purchased in the names of associates of organised crime figures.



'Your Safety: Our Priority'

Our members often lament their inability to disrupt the model of organised crime and punish those at the top in a tangible way.

Any reform that tightens loopholes used by serious criminals to protect their ill-gotten gains, is not only in the interests of our members, as we articulated in 2017, but in the interest of the community.

Credit where it is due, this is a good reform.



Brett Coloe.

GO WELL, BRETT

I want to acknowledge the hard work of our team at TPAV, which has not yielded for a second since EBA negotiations commenced almost a year ago.

A batch of new delegates and our Pat Hunter program participants had an opportunity to see and hear from our people last month.

They were exposed to the behind-the-scenes work that's done every day to make your life at work better and easier.

I was amazed to hear just how much it opened their eyes to the volume and range of work that is done for our membership, by professionals who care for our

members and by police and PSOs that join our organisation on secondment.

One of those people who has been with us on secondment is Inspector Brett Coloe, who returns to Victoria Police this month after a number of years leading our Wellbeing Services Team.

Brett's work has helped thousands of members with their wellbeing and in times of crisis.

I thank him and those that remain at TPAV for their continued effort.

We're in the midst of one of the busiest periods our organisation has seen during my time as Secretary.

Thank you Brett and thank you to our team for the work you do each day for our members.



COVER LIKE NO OTHER

How to keep a hold on health insurance costs

Choice has found the cost of the big provider's Gold Hospital policies has soared over the last three years. But Police Health is bucking that trend.

The consumer group found the national average price increase of Gold Hospital policies for some bigger providers over the past three years was 31.5%.¹

Yet, Police Health's national average price increase over the same time was only 4.16%.

It's important to note that the Choice research compared premiums for Gold policies available to new customers in NSW with a \$750 excess on 1 February 2021 with those available on 1 February 2024.

Restricted membership funds like Police Health were not included in the analysis.

Increased cost of Gold Hospital policies on offer to new members over the last three years¹



+4.16%
National average, NO excess

HCF	NSW \$750 excess	+34.4%
Bupa	NSW \$750 excess	+35.4%
NIB	NSW \$750 excess	+36.4%
Medibank	NSW \$750 excess	+43%

Source: Choice February 2024

What does that mean for Victorians?

If you have Gold Hospital health insurance with one of the big-name insurers instead of Police Health, you pay more in premiums and likely have a \$500/\$750 excess on top of that.

Here's how Police Health compares per month for Gold Hospital Family premiums available in Victoria at time of publication.

Cost of Gold Hospital premiums for a family policy in Victoria²



Gold Hospital No excess **\$378.96**

Medibank

Gold Protect Hospital \$500 excess **\$531.74**

Bupa

Gold Comprehensive Hospital \$500 excess **\$570.87**

HCF

Hospital Premium Gold \$750 excess **\$500.15**

Being sneaky

The Choice report also found many instances of these bigger funds closing existing policies to new members while at the same time opening new policies that offer essentially the same cover but with a slightly different name and a much higher price tag.

But you don't have to worry about that with Police Health because it offers only three top level health insurance products:

- Gold Hospital
- Rolling Extras
- Gold Combined (Hospital and Extras)

It's one of the many reasons why we believe we're the best private health insurer for police officers and their families.

How does Police Health keep the price lower?

We only offer Gold Hospital cover because we believe all our members should be covered for the unexpected.

A big bonus of that is that our claims are better balanced, so we can offer excellent value for money on the most comprehensive top-level cover.

By consolidating all members into one comprehensive coverage level, Police Health can better manage and balance the risk pool.

This means it can spread the cost of claims more evenly across their membership base, helping to mitigate the risk of high claims and keeping top-level cover affordable for Australia's policing community.

SWITCHING IS EASY!

Switching to Police Health is easy, and there are no penalties in switching.

Continuity of cover is provided for new members transferring from another registered Australian health insurer, and Police Health will honour any waiting periods served for equal or greater cover with your previous insurer.

And you'll enjoy many benefits including:

- No excess or exclusions³
- 100% national Ambulance cover⁴

To switch, go to policehealth.com.au or call 1800 603 603

1. Choice compared the prices of Gold Hospital policies (\$750 Excess) available to new customers in February 2021 with those available in February 2024 in NSW. Police Health data has been added, showing the national average increase on Gold Hospital policy available in the same timeframe. <https://www.choice.com.au/money/insurance/health/articles/health-insurers-hiding-increases-to-top-level-cover>

2. Premium comparisons have been calculated based on Private Health Information Statements sourced from www.privatehealth.gov.au. Comparative premiums are based on a family policy (two adults and two dependents) in VIC with Base Tier Australian Government Rebate applied; no Lifetime Health Cover Loading; no aged-based or other applicable discounts. Benefits paid and out-of-pocket costs may differ by healthcare provider. Premiums quoted are current as at 12 October 2023.

3. Waiting Periods and other conditions apply. Doctors, Hospitals and Service Providers must be recognised by us.

4. Excludes ambulance services covered by a third party arrangement such as a State/Territory government ambulance scheme or ambulance subscription. Service providers must be recognised by Police Health.

COMING TO A
STATION NEAR YOU

Generation

NEXT



With vacancy rates growing in many areas and resourcing constraints stretching the front line at times to breaking point, the next generation of police in Victoria has arguably never been more important to the salvation of the current one.

By Brendan Roberts

That pipeline of support begins at the police academy and amid a recent recruiting campaign, the classrooms and dorms are full, with two squads of 24 recruits walking in through the gates and out into the world of policing each fortnight.

“So, they leave here well aware of those pressures and we do that deliberately, because one of the worst things we could do is to throw them into that environment unprepared.”

No average recruit

Recent data shows the average age of the recruit intake since September is much younger than in recent years, following a greater push to attract recruits out of high school and university.

“We’re in the early twenties for our average age at the moment, around that 21-to-24-year-old age group. Having said that, there is no average recruit,” he said.

“I just finished a swearing in ceremony, we had people who were up to their second or third careers and the diversity as far as cultural backgrounds go is significant, which is really pleasing, we’re starting to reflect the Victorian community. We see a good mix of gender too, which is very good for us.”

Complete transparency

Assistant Commissioner Tim Hansen said that before graduates crossed the threshold into policing, they were given a true picture of the resourcing constraints and pressurised environment they were walking into.

“At any given week here we have approximately 800 recruits going through the program and that’s been pretty consistent since about September last year,” Assistant Commissioner Hansen said.

“We talk to them about the acute capacity issues around the organisation and the environment they are walking into, the workload, the impact of rostering and the responsibility back to community to build trust and confidence.

Pictures by Marty Dixon.





We're in the early twenties for our average age at the moment, around that 21-to-24-year-old age group."

Two of the recent graduates *The Journal* spoke to, Constable Bertie Gomez, 22, and Constable Jamie Lam, 20, fall into the recent trend of school-leaver recruits.

"Ever since I was in school, I wanted to be a police officer," Constable Gomez said.

"But I went to university to get my Bachelor of Criminal Justice. I thought I might have been too young to come into policing straight out of school, but I wanted to."

"As part of my university studies I got to do a placement with prosecutions and that was my first real insight into Victoria Police as I don't have any family or friends in the job, and it really motivated me even more to get into this career."

At age 20, this is also Constable Lam's first career.

"I've always had a calling to policing, I've always wanted to help people and have a positive impact on the community. Ever since around year nine I've wanted to do this," he said.

He's hoping for the opportunity to work in PORT or CIRT after gaining experience in community policing.

Exceeding expectations

While this recent influx of recruits might be younger and less worldly, Assistant Commissioner Hansen says they are no less professional or driven to make a difference.

"They are impressive. The number one thing that strikes me is their motivation, they are really, really keen to get out there. Their sense of motivation to learn and soak up knowledge is the number one thing I tend to take away.

"I think their professionalism stands out, they are really aware of the history of the organisation and that connection of service to the community and so for many of them, it's about fulfilling their obligations to make sure the community is as safe as it can be."

Fast-tracking training

Maintaining the momentum of the recent recruitment boom is the next challenge. Assistant Commissioner Hansen says finding ways to make becoming a police officer a quicker and easier process is a current focus.

"We have a project underway at the moment where we are reviewing recruit training. At the moment it takes 31 weeks and we are looking at opportunities to reduce that timeframe without dropping our standards. We want to be more efficient in the delivery of the program, so that hopefully, we might be able to get them out in 20-something weeks," he said.

Getting these graduates to where they are needed most is the next step.

"We understand where the vacancy rates are and those areas that are most stressed from a capacity perspective and we try to service them as a primary need, but we are also mindful of trying to



Constable Jamie Lam with his parents.

deploy recruits in an area that is close to their home," he said.

"This is why it becomes critically important for us to start recruiting police from rural Victoria. We're really hoping to increase our footprint across rural and regional Victoria.

"If we can attract people from these areas to join, we may be able to keep more of them and address the vacancy rates more sustainably."

Born to serve

Twenty-four-year-old recruit, Constable Matthew Cox fits into this category. He hails from Bendigo and will return to the area he grew up in to begin his policing career.

Formerly a plumber, Matthew said serving the community was always a passion that he wanted to pursue.

"I always wanted to become a copper or an ambo and serve the community, this has been a dream for me and I'm very happy to be here," he said.



Constable Joel Lay with brother, Mitch.



Constable Jen Tapper was presented with the Angela Rose Taylor Award.

Attracting recruits is a battle Victoria Police appears to be winning, but keeping them is a more complex task.

"That's a societal issue, not just one that policing is facing. It's about making people engaged with the work that they're doing and we have a role there in making sure there are professional development opportunities that are accessible to members," Assistant Commissioner Hansen said.

Assistant Commissioner Hansen identified other key areas that require reform to make the job more sustainable for all members.

"Roster reform and the impact of poor rostering and bureaucracy and duplicity in report writing are other key factors," he said.

"The more we can modernise our systems, both rostering and our digital systems and streamline the bureaucracy of the workforce, the more engaged (members will) be and the more motivated they will be and hopefully that extends their career."

"There is a critical importance in getting the recruiting, resourcing and the deploying model right."

Meet the NEXT GENERATION of recruits



Matthew Cox

Age: 24

What station will you be posted to? Bendigo

Is this your first career? I was a plumber previously.

What are your career aspirations? I'd like to do frontline work, but over all I'd like to be a detective.

What have you found most challenging? Being away from home and the travel time.

What has surprised you? How in-depth the training and learning components are.



Jamie Lam

Age: 20

What station will you be posted to? Endeavour Hills

Is this your first career? Yes.

What are your career aspirations? I really enjoy the tactical side of the job, so maybe PORT or CIRT.

What have you found most challenging? Getting across the legal side of the job, learning the laws and policing powers.

What has surprised you? Getting used to the drills.



Tracey Burley

Age: 31

What station will you be posted to? Broadmeadows

Is this your first career? Worked previously as a supermarket and restaurant manager.

What are your career aspirations? I have aspirations to get into the Dog Squad, but I would also like to get experience in family violence roles and other frontline positions.

What have you found most challenging? The constant assessments, given the time that has passed since I was at school.

What has surprised you? The drills, to a degree.



Joel Lay

Age: 24

What station will you be posted to? Waurin Ponds

Is this your first career? No, for the past five years I have previously worked in audio visual commercial integration on things like PA systems, emergency management systems and electronic signage displays.

What are your career aspirations? Intelligence and surveillance work, somewhere where I can use the skills I've developed in my previous career.

What have you found most challenging? Living in and being away from family. It has been really good in the sense that you form close bonds with your squad mates, but if I was to say anything it would be being away from family and out of that normal routine.

What has surprised you? Nothing really, I had a good understanding of what to expect given I have close family who have done it all before.



Jen Tapper

Age: 40

What station will you be posted to? Rowville

Is this your first career? No, I was a criminal lawyer prior to joining.

What are your career aspirations? I just wanted to do general policing to start with, so that I can see where I might want to go. I'd like to be a detective, but possibly prosecutions given my background."

What have you found most challenging? The balance between home life and academy life.

What has surprised you? I didn't really think much about marching prior to joining, or being in a paramilitary type environment, but it has grown on me.



Berty Gomez

Age: 22

What station will you be posted to? Footscray

Is this your first career? Previously a supervisor at a department store.

What are your career aspirations? I don't have a particular focus, and given my age, I've got time to try a lot of areas. I'm open to general duties, highway patrol, K9, CIRT, SOG.

What have you found most challenging? The travel time here, given I'm not living at the academy has been a little challenging.

What has surprised you? The sheer amount of people in uniform certainly surprised me at the beginning, but you get used to that pretty quickly.

Our Best and Bravest to be honoured in Melbourne

2024 PFA NATIONAL POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS



NOMINATIONS CLOSE
30 JUNE 2024

2023 bravery award winners, Constable Aaron Larsen and Constable Deborah Bradley from NT.

The 2024 Police Federation of Australia's National Bravery Awards are coming to Melbourne.

Nominations for the prestigious awards, developed by police for police to recognise exceptional acts in exceptional circumstances, are now open.

Do you know someone worthy of nomination?

SELECTION CRITERIA

1. The nominee must be a sworn police officer from an Australian police jurisdiction.
2. Nominees must have undertaken an outstanding act of courage or bravery, by selflessly putting themselves in harms way to protect others, going well beyond the call of duty.
3. Where feasible, the incident should have occurred in the past twelve months, however exceptions could include if the matter is subjudice or if other unavoidable delays have occurred.

The online nomination form is available at policeweek.org.au/bravery-awards and close on **30 June 2024**.

The National Police Bravery Awards will be presented in Canberra on 17 September 2024.



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SHOCK VALUE

New Taser training rolling out across the state



By Brendan Roberts

Having every frontline police officer and PSO in Victoria equipped with a Taser will save lives – but getting the new Taser 7 into their hands as a tactical option that bridges the considerable tactical gulf between OC spray or a baton and a firearm, is a complex logistical and infrastructural exercise.

Training rollout

To accommodate training for those who have never had access to a Taser, and re-training for those who have previously used the older Taser X2, 10 new training facilities have been established at Mildura, Swan Hill, Geelong, Warrnambool, Horsham, Ballarat, Bendigo, Moe, Sale and Wangaratta, in addition to existing facilities at Craigieburn and the Academy.

Members who are not qualified to use a Taser must undergo a two-day face-to-face course as well as completing e-learn courses, while members already trained and qualified in the use of Taser must complete a one-day face-to-face transition course and e-learn courses to be qualified to use the new model.

As at mid-March, 1,846 members had completed their training. The aim is to have 10,300 frontline members trained and equipped by the end of 2026.

This project is the culmination of TPAV's long-fought for and ultimately successful campaign to have all frontline members equipped with the potentially life-saving devices, following a series of incidents in which members or civilians were seriously injured in police shootings.

A win for safety

"This is something we fought tooth and nail for, for all of our frontline members to have as a tactical option," TPAV Secretary Wayne Gatt said.

"We have said ad nauseum that there is a massive gulf between a baton or OC spray and a firearm when our members find themselves in a high-risk incident. Having a Taser provides them with an effective non-lethal tactical option that bridges that gap."



Pictures by Marty Dixon.

How it will work

Members take part in the training only after their stations have received the necessary modification works to ensure there is sufficient capability to store, dock and test the new Taser 7 devices they are being equipped with.

All stations are receiving an uplift to their Equipment Issue Office. They must have a CED dock installed; safe storage for CED handles and cartridges and an area fit-out for performing the safe load/unload function test.

“

This is something we fought tooth and nail for, for all of our frontline members to have as a tactical option.”

TPAV Secretary, Wayne Gatt



“

It is quite a balancing act to deliver this work while minimising the impact on frontline policing.”

Assistant Commissioner Dean McWhirter



A snapshot of TPAV's public campaign for more Tasers for frontline members.

These modifications required vary from station to station, depending on the existing infrastructure in place.

“A program of this size requires complex coordination and touches on many areas of organisation,” said Dean McWhirter, Assistant Commissioner for Transit and Public Safety Command.

“For example, stations need power, data and safe storage in place to support CEDs. Once the station infrastructure is ready, the program must carefully time the deployment of devices with the training of members to avoid their skills perishing.

“It is quite a balancing act to deliver this work while minimising the impact on frontline policing.”

Safer and more accurate

The *Journal* was there as members from Springvale and Dandenong, the pilot stations for metropolitan Melbourne, undertook a two-day training course at the Police Academy, with simulated exercises mimicking the types of incidents where a taser may be required in the field.

The new Taser 7 devices are safer to use, more accurate and have built-in technology that automatically activates the user's Body Worn Camera when drawn.

They've already proven valuable for the first tranche of trained members from Springvale and Dandenong, with Tasers drawn to safely arrest multiple suspects

including a man wielding a machete in a pizza shop and a sex offender who threatened police with a pick-axe and hammer before arming himself with a knife.

An invaluable asset

In a handful of more serious instances Tasers have been discharged.

They include a man who allegedly grabbed at a police officer's gun, another man armed with a knife who allegedly punched an officer in the face and an accused carjacker who violently resisted an arrest after an erratic driving spree.

“We know there are examples of when they have proven invaluable for our

members and we know of examples where our members would've desperately wanted to have had them as an option, but weren't equipped with them,” Wayne said.

“This will take time, but we know the end result is worth it because nothing is more important than the safety of our police and PSO members when they are out on the street protecting us all.”

Planned training

By the end of September, Victoria Police aims to have trained all general duties and Highway Patrol members from the Eastern and Western regions (excluding Divisions ED1 and ED2 which will be trained as part of metropolitan Melbourne); the Special Operations Group, Critical Incident Response Team and Public Order Response Team, along with members from Springvale and Dandenong Police stations.

Training of members in metropolitan Melbourne will commence in October 2024, with the ultimate aim to have 10,300 police and PSOs trained by the end of 2026.

ANGELA TAYLOR MEMORIAL RUN / WALK

In honour of Constable Angela Taylor and all Victoria Police members that have died serving and protecting our community.



Sunday, 21 April | Albert Park Lake

There are the options of a 5km walk, 5km or 10km run – 4 legged friends are more than welcome to join in as well.

Entry Fees:

Adults: \$38 Under 18: \$1.

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OR JOIN A TEAM



Angela Taylor Memorial Shield is open to all Police, Emergency Service and Health Care teams (5km & 10km run) – The team with the best aggregate time in the 5km and the 10km Run will retain the Angela Taylor Memorial Shield for 12 months. Current holders of the Angela Taylor Memorial Shield – 5km run Team Craigburn Vic Pol and 10km run Team AFP Melbourne.



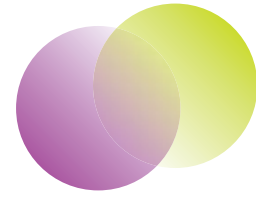
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*TERMS AND CONDITIONS: 1. This bonus offer is available on applications received between 1 March 2024 - 30 April 2024 and settled by 30 June 2024. Bonus offer terms and conditions apply. This bonus offer is for new owner-occupier and investment home purchases and refinances from other financial institutions to BankVic. BankVic membership eligibility and lending criteria applies. Fees and charges may apply. Information about our terms and conditions, interest rates, fees and charges are available at bankvic.com.au. 2. Non police eligible members will receive a bonus of \$250 and all eligible police members will receive a bonus of \$350 per month for 6 months deposited into their BankVic transaction or savings accounts every third Wednesday of every month between July and December 2024. This account must be in the same name as the home loan account. For joint accounts, the bonus will be credited to a jointly held transaction or savings account otherwise, to the primary account holder. This offer is limited to one bonus per loan, regardless of the number of mortgaged properties involved in the transaction. Split and supplementary loans against one security will be eligible for one bonus only. A minimum loan amount of \$200,000 and a maximum LVR of 80% is required. 3. This offer is not compatible with any other bonus or cash back offer issued by BankVic. BankVic may vary or end this offer at any time without notice. This offer excludes refinances from another BankVic loan. Split and supplementary loans against one security will be eligible for one bonus only. 4. Police eligibility is limited to current police employees or the Australian Federal Police. 5. A Target Market Determination (TMD) is available at bankvic.com.au. Police Financial Services Limited ABN 33 087 651 661 - trading as BankVic | AFSL and Australian Credit Licence 240293.



Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme

Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme is closing soon

**The Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme
will close on 30 April 2024**

Since its establishment, the scheme has helped many members who have experienced workplace sexual harassment and sex discrimination to seek support and be heard.

The Scheme offers a range of options to former and current Victoria Police employees who have experienced workplace sex discrimination or sexual harassment, including counselling, a restorative engagement process and financial payments.

It is facilitated independently of Victoria Police by the Department of Justice and is all about acknowledging the wrongs that have happened in the past.

Participants may choose to participate in restorative engagement, which involves taking part in a conference (a private meeting) with a senior

representative of Victoria Police to discuss their experiences, ask questions, and raise awareness of organisational improvements and strategies to prevent others experiencing what the participant experienced.

Restorative engagement conferences are available face-to-face through an online video meeting, or through the telephone or letters. They are a safe and constructive discussion. It does not involve any alleged perpetrator. Rather, it is an opportunity to share your personal experience with a senior Victoria Police representative in a confidential environment.

Senior Victoria Police staff have undergone specialised training to act as a Victoria Police representative in the restorative conferences.

Participants' feedback about restorative engagement has been positive, with members reporting they felt believed, the Victoria Police representatives were empathetic and authentic, and that the process was healing for them.

TPAV has supported members through the restorative engagement process, including by attending the conferences as a support person.

If you have a lived experience of workplace sex discrimination or sexual harassment within Victoria Police, we encourage you to consider participating in the Restorative Engagement and Redress Scheme.





Your next cheap getaway is a click away

Feature compiled by Marty Dixon

Nestled in the state's east is picturesque Lakes Entrance – with a warm encouraging community feel, an ideal place for a quick getaway for couples and families.

With the alpine region a short drive to the north, the famous 90-mile surf beach on your doorstep and surrounded by the Gippsland lakes, there is something for everyone.

TPAV has four holiday homes available for members – at a very generous rate – so consider it for your next holiday or getaway.

Take time to have a look through all the different sightseeing and local attractions Lakes has on offer for visitors. The East Gippsland region has many great attractions for visitors, some of which are featured here.

We encourage members who stay in one of our Lakes Entrance units to visit these attractions and to mention that you have read about them in the *TPAV Journal*!

Special offer!

TPAV is offering a special rate for members wanting to stay at one of our four holiday homes in Lakes Entrance with a **\$100 discount** off our regular, and already moderate pricing. Available for week-long bookings only.

To book your Lakes Entrance holiday jump onto our website!

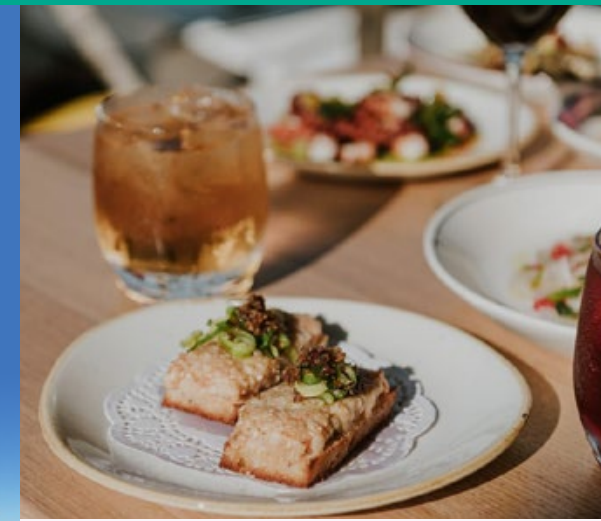


VENTURE OUT – BIKE – KAYAK – STAND UP PADDLE + PACKAGES

Venture Out is in the business of adventure, offering tours, hire and sales so you can get out and enjoy Lakes Entrance and surrounds. Whether riding or paddling, there are loads of options to choose from that will make you want to stay longer and explore more.



VENTURE OUT



SODAFISH

SODAFISH

No visit to Lakes is complete without heading to Sodafish – situated on the waterfront – it's never short of fresh seafood! Showcasing the best of local and regional offerings. Bookings are a must to avoid being disappointed!

sodafish.com.au



LAKES ENTRANCE SEGWAY ADVENTURES

Segway through the Vines, Eastern Beach Adventure, The Entrance Adventure. The ultimate segway adventure – gliding across the smooth sands and taking in the natural beauty of the beaches around. Lakes Entrance Segway offers a number of tours for you and your family to enjoy. Suitable for ages 12 and up.

Book today 0411 167 987

LONSDALE SCENIC ECO-CRUISES

Step aboard for a 3-hour cruise, exploring from Lakes Entrance through to Lake King showcasing the natural flora and fauna of the area with afternoon tea, coffee and homemade scones included.

Bookings essential – 0413 66 638

Lonsdale Eco Cruises



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Footbridge Mini Golf, Lollyshop and Ice Cream Shack has it all when looking for something fun to do! Make sure to show this page – giving each family ONE FREE GAME!

Book today 0411 167 987



BLOODY GOOD COFFEE

Situated in the heart of Lakes Entrance esplanade, the name says it all.

The café offers all serving emergency service members a 50% discount.





TPAV **Holiday Homes**



PEELS CRUISES

This 4th generation family run business has been operating in the local area for over 100 years. Allowing visitors to explore the wildlife of the local lakes, rivers and ocean with a variety of cruises available designed to suit all.

Call today 0409 946 292

WYANGA PARK WINERY

This family owned and operated winery and restaurant is a short drive from the centre of Lakes. Open 7 days with wine tasting from 10am.

Leave the car! Wyanga offer a unique opportunity to enjoy a lunch cruise from town to the winery which includes a full wine tasting and lunch whilst cruising the North Arm.



SEAS THE DAY BOAT HIRE

Based in Paynesville, this self-drive boat hire allows you to take the wheel and explore the Gippsland Lakes yourself! No boat licence is required, and each vehicle has the capacity for 12 people.

Call Robert on 0422 042 032



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Opening a door to change a child's life



It was a Coroner's Court case involving the tragic death of a child that made Leading Senior Constable Premala Thevar make a life-changing phone call. That call led to her becoming a foster carer with MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop) in 2021.

Originally from Albury NSW, Prem moved to Melbourne and studied criminology before realising her childhood dream of becoming a police officer.

After several years of general duties policing, Prem now works as a Police Prosecutor attached to the Police Coronial Support Unit.

Through her work in policing, Prem has met many vulnerable young people and families. She's seen first-hand the toll family violence, mental health and addiction issues can have on families and the need for children to have safety and

security while their parents access help getting their lives back on track.

Respite care

Foster care has fitted seamlessly into Prem's life.

"I'm a respite carer and I can work with MacKillop around availability. So I might have a kid for a weekend while their regular carers get some respite, or for a night or two during the week. It works around my other commitments and my lifestyle."

The young people Prem looks after are generally aged between nine and 14.

"I'm accredited to care for kids aged five to 15, but I've found I'm better suited to caring for the older, pre-teen and teen kids as they're a bit more independent and the type of activities we can do together is broader.

"I love trying new food places and it's so much fun to take a kid to their first sushi train or hot pot restaurant. We might go to the movies or off on an adventure to explore a new neighbourhood. I like to

make sure they have input in suggesting activities.

"I'm a single carer, but often when I have a child with me, we'll hang out with my brother and sister and their families. It's great that they've been able to support me with fostering."

Victoria Police and Prem's supervisors have also been supportive of her decision to be a carer.

"Everyone is so understanding, and I have really great managers who work to give me the flexibility I need to provide foster care.

"I'd encourage other police members to think about how foster care could fit into their lives and the type of work we do. We're already doing this job because we care and to see the difference you can make to a child's life, even for a little while, makes it so worthwhile."

There are many different types of foster care including: emergency care, respite care and long-term care. Foster carers can be single, married, in same sex

relationships, work, be retired or study, have children of their own or not. The most important thing is that carers want to provide safety and security for a vulnerable child or young person.

To find out more about becoming a foster carer please visit the MacKillop Family Services website www.mackillop.org.au

“

We're already doing this job because we care and to see the difference you can make to a child's life, even for a little while, makes it so worthwhile.”



Make a difference in a child's life

Join one of our online information sessions where you can talk to a foster carer like Prem.



Scan the QR code for more information.

 MacKillop Family Services
mackillop.org.au



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Training TPAV's newest Delegates and Assistant Delegates

Some of TPAV's newest Delegates and Assistant Delegates have come to our Members Centre to participate in training courses designed to assist them in their new roles.

The three-day course educates members about the day-to-day operations of TPAV, as well as the expectations and responsibilities associated with these roles.

Delegates serve as the eyes and ears on the ground for TPAV, helping to identify issues and the needs of members. We encourage all members to reach out to their Delegate or Assistant Delegate to seek advice or raise any concerns you may have.

You can find out who your local Delegate is via the member portal on the TPAV website.



We look forward to welcoming more training opportunities for members throughout the year.

TPAV Life Members' significant legacy celebrated

When a group of 24 TPAV Life Members gathered at TPAV's brand new home in East Melbourne last month at a function to honour their service and legacy, many of them felt like proud parents.

In welcoming them to the function, it was not lost on TPAV President Karl David and Secretary, Wayne Gatt, that a number of the Life Members being celebrated, as former Presidents, Secretaries, and Board members themselves in years gone by, had laid solid foundations that enabled the current crop of TPAV leaders to make it possible to bring to life this impressive facility that's been designed to serve and support TPAV members for generations to come.

"We're at a moment in history where a collective stood up and took on a mammoth task of taking on the largest project and investment ever taken in our union. A project conceptualised by some of you in the audience," said Karl.

Wayne also paid tribute to the important role played by our trail-blazing Life Members.

"I want to talk to you more about this place, but notably some of the people

in this room that while not here when we moved in, were instrumental in the planning of our new home.

"Even if you are a life members of decades past, please don't underestimate the contribution you have made to our values that have underpinned important decisions like this made by the current crop of leaders in the interests of our members.

"It's called setting an example; some call it 'leaving a legacy', and rest assured we follow your example and call on your past successes to inform our present but also to inform our future.

"We constantly learn and relearn lessons from the past. That's not to say that things don't change. They certainly do. But at our core, our mission remains the same. It's just the way we go about getting there and the challenges our members face that shift."

The function remembered TPAV Life Member Ken Robertson who passed away late last year, while TPAV's most recently inducted Life Members, John Laird and Ken Ashworth were acknowledged for their achievements.

Former TPAV Secretary, Greg Davies paid special tribute to three TPAV Life Members, former Secretary, Bryan Harding, Mary-Lou Allemand and her husband, the late Lionel Allemand.

Pictures courtesy of Charlotte Chung.



↑ Shane Butler, Krissi McMaster and Mick Harvey



← Jim and Rosemary Pilmer



← Susanne and Scott Robertson, daughter and son of the late TPAV Life Member, Ken Robertson who was remembered at the function



↑ Helen and Greg Davies



↑ Bryan Harding and daughter, Stephanie Harding



↑ Noell and Phil Edge



← Peter Griffiths, Grace Wolohan and Brendan Binney



↑ Shirley Hardy-Rix and Brian Rix

Beck's BlueHub success

Filled with excitement coupled with anticipation and a genuine determination to make a difference, Rebecca Marshall set foot into Victoria Police Academy in May 2001. She could never have known where this career would take her.

Since then, Beck has built a solid foundation in her career with a strong reputation for being tenacious, innovative and strategic in her decision making.

She has worked hard, focused on getting the job done and making a positive change and impact in the community and the force.

With a wealth of operational and leadership experience, she has been at the forefront, leading some of the most critical response units in Victoria Police.

A true leader taking her team with her, she is always on the lookout for members' welfare and wellbeing.

Dream Job

In November 2020, Beck reached 20 years in her career.

It was a milestone of sorts, filled with many of the accomplishments she had set out to achieve, including securing her dream role as the Yarra LAC.

However, soon after Beck landed this role the unexpected and unimaginable happened.

Beck found herself in the cardiac ward of The Epworth Hospital, following the onset of a heart attack. It was without doubt her toughest 'operation' yet.

Beck considers herself a strong advocate for members' wellbeing and was always looking out for her staff and colleagues. Yet, like many of us, she hadn't recognised her own health symptoms.

Following a robust and honest discussion with her supervisor, Beck decided to take leave and engaged the necessary support and resources for her recovery. The rest, as they say, is history.

Through her recovery she says she can now see that the writing was on the wall. She now realises that she was in fact suffering the symptoms of poor mental health without recognising it and that her physical injury was a secondary injury resulting from it.

Sheer determination

Three years on with that same determination she had when joining Victoria Police, Beck has endured a tough road to recovery, culminating with her return to work in January 2023. With the same nervous anticipation of 20 years ago, she was welcomed back with kindness from so many of her peers who generally cared and were happy to see her back at work.

For Beck this was a journey through PTSD. But, the woman that emerged on the other side is now a true example of post traumatic growth. She has worked on processing the emotions and pain, learning how to manage her triggers, distilling the toxic feelings and stigma that comes with mental health and is focused on becoming the best version of herself.

And that's the most inspiring part.

Now fully recovered, she once again feels like her old self, clearly recognises the symptoms and has tools to manage them should she need to.

Beck says the work she has done through TPAVs BlueHub has been critical and invaluable in her recovery.

TPAV's BlueHub team connected Beck to a renowned psychologist that had a wealth of experience working with police, navigating WorkCover, leave entitlements and other barriers specific to her needs. She lauds her psychologist for their patience and depth of knowledge of PTSD.

From little things big things grow

TPAV's nation leading BlueHub Project was created to provide specialised mental health assessment, treatment and streamlined support services for you, our members.

TPAV's BlueHub Project also provides specialised support, treatment and care to our AFP Southern Command colleagues and is viewed nationally and amongst tertiary care institutions as class leading.

BlueHub is designed to provide time limited, evidence-based treatment for mental health issues that have developed in the context of operational stressors and trauma.

BlueHub provides a centralised intake assessment service, allocation, waitlist management, risk management and provider liaison. All of these functions are managed in-house by the BlueHub Project team embedded within TPAV's Wellbeing Services.

In addition to member care, the team also manages clinical hub engagement, recruiting, onboarding of clinicians and training across Victoria. Our dedicated TPAV psychologists also facilitate a sector Community of Practice and evidence-based outcome measurements assessed quarterly.

From a concept, BlueHub has grown into a sophisticated health network, providing direct high-level care for our members with a goal of not only getting our members well again, but building their resilience and keeping them well for life beyond policing.

BlueHub has grown to become a tiered network where treatment formulas are informed by symptomology.

When assessing treatment data outcomes these are done comparatively with those in the ordinary community and the BlueHub data consistently sees major declines in symptom severity across all of the clinical measures.

It is important to note that the clinical data is simply that, data, and members' private information and medical records are not shared with any person or agency.

TPAV is immensely proud of BlueHub for the work this team is doing in providing a pathway back to health and work. We are committed to BlueHub and we are committed to our members.

Beck's story is an inspiring one, a difficult road, but one well-travelled. Through Beck's story we hope that this journey will inspire others to take that first step, knock on the door and set foot on the road to recovery.

It's okay to reach out for help and say you're not okay and access the many resources and services available to you.

Lessons I've learnt

What I have learnt through this experience is as first responders it is normal to experience some form of mental health injury throughout our careers.

It's okay to reach out for help and say you're not okay and access the many resources and services available to you.

It's healthy and a normal thing to do when you are not well, be it physically or mentally.

My advice is not to wait until your relationship is suffering, your kids are affected, and you are physically and mentally numb.

As a leader in this organisation, I believe we need to stand up and say it's okay and normal to not be okay. Upon my return a number of high-ranking officers shared their personal mental health stories with me. I was honoured to hear their stories, and now I'm sharing mine.

I am proud to be a leader within Victoria Police. I am proud to say I have 23 years operational and tactical policing experience and I have worked through mental health, accessing the support services I needed to recover.

If you or someone you know needs help, please contact BlueHub at bluehub.org.au.





Victoria Police
Ceremonial Team
— visit our —
**Member
Memorial**

If you have visited our new home on 70 Jolimont Street, East Melbourne you'll notice our member memorial located on the ground floor, upon entry.

Feature compiled by Srithar Visuasam.

Never forgotten

Viewable from the street front, the memorial features a video tribute to each Victoria Police member who had fallen in the line of duty.

The Victoria Police Academy ceremonial team was a key contributor to the development of the memorial, having coordinated the moving images that feature prominently on the television screen.

A fitting tribute

Recently Sergeants Justin Rutter and Jonathan Payne of the Academy visited us to see the memorial for the first time in person.

“We organised some of the ceremonial elements that you’ll see as the names come across. Each of those different elements are parts that are involved in all the ceremonies that we run at police graduations and funerals,” said Sergeant Rutter.

“**It’s about us as the collective. It’s about our members as friends and colleagues.**”

The memorial features a rolling video tribute to the members who paid the ultimate sacrifice, with the first occurrence on 30 December 1837, when Constable Matthew Tomkin (registered number 228) was shot in the Western District by an escaped convict.

Alongside the large television screen sits a quote from the police ode (pictured).

The Police Association Victoria Secretary Wayne Gatt talks to the importance of this message.

“The words on the Police Memorial come from the ode. And a particular passage that talks about us who are left behind, I think that’s appropriate. It’s about us as the collective. It’s about our members as friends and colleagues.”

Sergeant Rutter recommends a visit to the memorial should you be in the area.

“Spend the 15–20 minutes for all the names to reel through. I think that it’s a really powerful thing that TPAV have put together.”

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS



By Detective Inspector Kate O'Neill

What a great start to the year we have had engaging, connecting and providing support to Police Legatees.

The continued financial support of members means that regional lunches, getaways and events, as well as education grants, birthday gifts, driving lessons, mature age education support and financial assistance will continue throughout 2024 and beyond.

There are many other great ways you can support Victoria Police Legacy throughout the year, one of which is the upcoming Run4Blue virtual race held in May.

We'd love you to join us! Challenge yourself, your friends, your family or your

colleagues. Join individually or create or join a team. Every kilometre will help raise funds to support police legatees.

Whether you choose to run like the wind, take a leisurely stroll or get on your bike, every type of race is encouraged. If you're unable to physically race, there are participation options for you too.

Stay connected with us!

- @vicpolicelegacy
- @Victoria Police Legacy
- @victoriapolicelegacy
- @victoriapolicelegacy

policelegacyvic.org.au

All funds raised in Victoria go directly to Victoria Police Legacy.
Visit run4blue.net to register or for more details.

Victoria Police Legacy makes a difference

In recent months, we have endured the loss of two members of the policing family to suicide.

These members, like all others lost in policing, leave behind something far more important than the job. They leave behind a family. A family that requires our support.

When these families are young, the support they require is more bespoke.

The path ahead for families who have lost a loved one in these circumstances is as long as it is painful, particularly when children are young and need support many years into the future.

And so it follows that when these tragedies strike, the policing community needs to have confidence that the hand of support that comes from Victoria Police Legacy will be there for them and will make a difference in their most challenging moment and into the future.

I know that Police Legacy's hand of support has already reached out to these families and that it will continue to so, as their needs and circumstances change in the future.

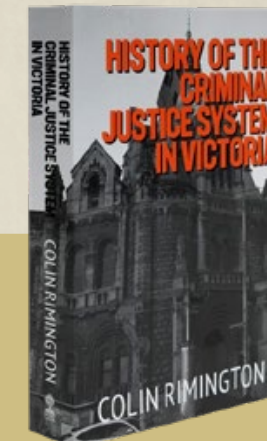
Given the trauma attached to policing and the risks associated with sworn service, it is essential that we maintain a strong support of Police Legacy, so that it can support our Police Legatees.

There are few occupations that carry the psychological and physical risks that policing does. When they put on their uniform, our police officers and PSOs wear a responsibility to protect the community in a way that is unparalleled within the community. The risks are real and tangible and so is the profound loss when a police officer or PSO fails to return home, due to their work.

It is the reason why Police Legacy was established so many years ago and the reason why it must remain as strong into the future as it is today.

The hand of support that it offers our members and the families they leave behind, is simply too important.

Wayne Gatt
Secretary of The Police Association Victoria



Shop to support police families who have lost a loved one

'History of the Criminal Justice System in Victoria' by author Colin Rimington, is a fantastic piece of recorded criminal history which has been dedicated in memory of the late Chief Commissioner S.I. Mick Miller AO, LVO, QPM.

All proceeds from the sale of the book are donated to VPL to support those in the police family who have lost a loved one.

Grab yourself a copy today and shop VPL merchandise.





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*Eligibility for the special 5% interest rate offer is limited to current police employees who open a 5-month term deposit between 18 March 2024 and 30 April 2024 and request the special rate by calling 13 63 73 or visiting a branch. This offer is only available for new term deposits. At the end of the term, if your term deposit automatically rolls over, it will be subject to the interest rate at that date. BankVic may vary or cease this offer at any time. Current interest rates and target market determination for this product can be found at bankvic.com.au. Police Financial Services Limited ABN 33 087 651 661 - trading as BankVic | AFSL and Australian Credit Licence 240293.

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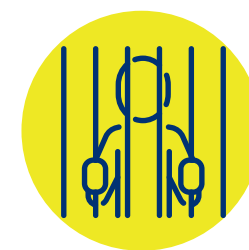
Discharge of a firearm by a member



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Market update

The Great Australian Dream of owning your own home is still alive and well despite the challenging economic market we are currently experiencing.

Multiple interest rate rises and challenging cost of living expenses wherever you turn still haven't curbed our enthusiasm to own a home. Prices have remained stable and whilst supply of new properties to the market has increased slightly, it is still outweighed by demand.

There is no doubt that owning a home and paying a mortgage is more challenging than ever, but it is evident that buyers are adjusting their lifestyles to be able to keep their existing home or buy one.

What is old is new, I am sure most of you remember your parents having multiple jobs when you were young, a treat was fish and chips on a Friday,

and a holiday was piling into the family car and heading for the coast. I think today's buyers are slowing making the adjustments our parents did to keep the dream alive.

Whilst certain markets will rise and fall, I believe we will see 2024 as a year of stability. Overall, I see prices remaining stable with good quality family homes remaining in high demand.

Buyers will adjust, while older original homes have been unpopular with buyers in recent times, I think you will see them make a comeback as buyers sacrifice modern comforts for size and location.

Overall, whether you are a buyer or a seller, in 2024 you can have confidence that the market will remain stable.

Demand will still outweigh supply but not to the extent we have seen in recent years.



The investment dilemma

Over the last few months, I have had multiple members contact me asking about buying an investment property and where would I recommend.

In the past I have always recommended areas throughout Melbourne and its outer suburbs.

I like 'feel and touch real estate'. What I mean by that is locations I know intimately and are within an easy drive from where I live. These are locations that I know the local amenities and infrastructure, I know who lives in these areas, the rental demand and historical capital growth.

Unfortunately, of late when asked where to buy my answer is 'anywhere but Victoria', and it's not just me, over the last two years where have seen nearly 20 percent of long-term investors sell their properties due to increased costs and regulations.

It is important to understand that there is no winner in the current rental crisis in Victoria. Renters are coping hefty increases of up to 25 percent while investors are wearing the brunt of new taxes and compliance costs. It is also important to understand that Victoria is the only state that has all these taxes.

So, what are all the new costs that are seeing investors leave the market in droves?

Compliance

Victoria introduced new compliance laws for investment properties over the last couple of years. Some of the new compliance laws are good and provide safer housing for renters but they were introduced far too quickly without much thought. The compliance inspections for electrical, gas and smoke alarms cost

an owner between \$700 to \$1,000 per year. However, the real cost comes in the minimum standards that were also introduced.

Many of our suburbs are dominated by older properties that simply don't comply with the new standards. Whilst there is nothing wrong with them, owners are being hit with costs in the tens of thousands of dollars to bring them up to the new standards. If you are buying an investment in Victoria, get someone to check if the property meets the new standards or get an estimate of the costs to bring it up to standard.

COVID Tax

The state government in its wisdom has introduced a COVID Tax for anyone who owns an investment property in Victoria. Yes, only investor. The tax will continue for the next 10 years and will cost investors \$900 per year, per investment property.

Land Tax

Anyone who owns a property other than their principal place of residence pays land tax. Land tax is determined on the value of the land the property sits on. Land tax has increased significantly over the last few years and is estimated to keep increasing for the next ten years.

Add all these new costs on top of the existing costs of owning an investment and you will see there are better states to invest in than Victoria.



Luke Lawlor 0414 757 705

This is a FREE service to all current & retired members

For more information on Emergency Services Property Advisors, visit the website at espropertyadvisors.com.au, or call Luke directly on **0414 757 705**.

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PICK OF THE SHELF



The Glass House

By Anne Buist & Graeme Simson

Published by Hachette Australia



A compelling, addictive novel for readers of *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* told with heart, humour and insight by Anne Buist and *The Rosie Project's* Graeme Simson.

Psychiatry registrar Doctor Hannah Wright, a country girl with a chaotic history, thought she had seen it all in the emergency room. But that was nothing compared to the psychiatric ward at Menzies Hospital.

Hannah must learn on the job in a strained medical system, as she and her fellow trainees deal with the common and the bizarre, the hilarious and the tragic, the treatable and the confronting.

Every day brings new patients: Chloe, who has a life-threatening eating disorder; Sian, suffering postpartum psychosis and fighting to keep her baby; and Xavier, the MP whose suicide attempt has an explosive story behind it. All the while, Hannah is trying to figure out herself.

With intelligence, frankness and humour, eminent psychiatrist Anne Buist tells it like it is, while co-writer Graeme Simson brings the light touch that made *The Rosie Project* an international bestseller and a respected contribution to the autism conversation.

Professor Anne Buist is Chair of Women's Mental Health at the University of Melbourne, with thirty years of clinical and research experience in perinatal psychiatry. With a multi-million-dollar grant from Beyond Blue, she established an Australia-wide screening program for perinatal depression. Anne began writing at eight, but medicine intervened until 2012, when she wrote an erotic fiction series (under a pseudonym). This was followed by four crime novels and a stand-alone thriller.

Dr Graeme Simson's debut novel, *The Rosie Project*, has sold over five million copies in forty languages, spending 65 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. A film is in development with Sony Pictures. The two *Rosie* sequels were also international bestsellers as were *The*

Best of Adam Sharp, in development with New Sparta Pictures, and *Two Steps Forward*, which was written with Anne, and optioned to Fox Searchlight / Disney. Graeme and Anne are married and live in Melbourne.

WIN! YOUR OWN COPY

For your chance to win a copy of *The Glass House*, simply email journal@tpav.org.au and answer the following question:

The famous Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis was ... Freud?

Entrants are asked to please include their full name and registered number, if applicable.

MYFANWY JONES



COOL WATER

FROM THE MILES FRANKLIN SHORTLISTED AUTHOR OF *LEAP*

Cool Water

By Myfanwy Jones

Published by Hachette Australia

From the Miles Franklin-shortlisted author of *Leap* comes an unforgettable new novel about fathers and sons, and the damage that can ripple through generations.

Frank Herbert's family has gathered beside Tinaroo Dam for his daughter's wedding – the first time they've been together since the death of his father, Joe, a year earlier. It should be a time of celebration, but things are shaky for Frank, in his marriage and his new business. Joe never did think Frank could do or make anything worthwhile.

Like Frank, the dam itself has seen better days. Built in the 1950s for the tobacco industry, it is lower now than ever before. As the water recedes, objects begin to emerge from below the surface – abstract and disquieting. It seems the past is always lurking.

Frank's grandfather, Victor Herbert, was the butcher of Tinaroo during the dam's construction, but Joe never spoke of him. Joe was not a talker, but he could

roar. What ancient wrongs was his fury concealing?

In the midst of wedding preparations, but unable to utter the words he needs to save his own marriage, Frank is drawn onto the water. Beneath the fig trees, where bloated black bream circle, he hears the echo of his father's voice, forcing him to look down – and back.

Moving between the weekend of the wedding and the year in the mid-1950s that cursed the Herbert men for three generations, *Cool Water* asks what it means to be a good man, and what we risk when we allow the patterns of the past to hold us in their grip. The question is: can Frank eclipse his family's shadow, to find a way into a future of his own making?

WIN! YOUR OWN COPY

For your chance to win a copy of *Cool Water*, simply email journal@tpav.org.au and answer the following question:

Warragamba Dam is the largest concrete dam in Australia. In which state is it located?

Entrants are asked to please include their full name and registered number, if applicable.

Mediation

By James Turnbull, Principal,
Berry Family Law

“

The good news is that we resolve about 90% of disputes without having to file proceedings in Family Courts.



Since we started working with TPAV members as preferred suppliers of family law advice more than ten years ago, we have assisted many hundreds of members in resolving their family law dispute.

Most members are concerned about what seeing us may cost. That concern is sensible. The good news is that we resolve about 90% of their disputes without having to file proceedings in Family Courts. Most of those disputes have been resolved through a form of Alternate Dispute Resolution known as mediation.

So, what is mediation exactly, and how does it work?

Mediation is a dispute resolution process where a well-trained and independent expert third party (the mediator) helps facilitate disputing parties and their lawyers to reach an agreement.

Mediation, compared to Court, is a relatively informal process where separated parties can discuss most if not all issues which have arisen at the end of their relationship. This is most often their property settlement, parenting arrangements for their children, spousal support and child support.

Mediation can also resolve things much broader than a Judge or a Court has jurisdiction over or might be prepared to consider, for example, who gets the pets or things like a baby's feeding and sleeping routines.

Mediation is not novel, but it can make sense for a lot of people for a lot of reasons.

These reasons include that it:

- **Is cost effective** – usually much less than going to Court.
- **Is time efficient** – from filing to conclusion, a matter in Court takes more than 12 months and sometimes more than two years. A mediation can occur as soon as everybody is ready. There is no point waiting around in a huge Court list for a Judge to become available.
- **Is better** than sending legal letters back and forth, often taking weeks to get a response; in a mediation you get a response in minutes not days.
- **Is less emotionally draining** – in a mediation, your lawyer will represent you, work out with you what needs to be said and do the talking for you. In Court, you will be cross-examined, one of life's less pleasant experiences.
- **Works** – Most of the mediations we run reach a final settlement on the day.

- **Confidential** – so even if you do not settle, nothing that is said or done in the mediation can be used against you in Court. The old saying *what goes on tour stays on tour* applies to mediations.

The process of mediation usually begins with an exchange of documents and information between the lawyers for the parties. After all, you cannot negotiate in an information vacuum.

The information and documents usually exchanged relate to any asset, liability, income, expense or superannuation. Sometimes, there is a need to agree to a valuation being obtained for the home or some another asset when the parties cannot agree on a value.

The process of document/information exchange and valuation can be planned concurrently with the appointment of a mediator. The best mediators we know, and use have a waitlist of about two months or so. This is around the same time as it takes to collect, collate and

exchange all of the material required for a mediation. The cost of any valuation and the cost of the mediator tend to be shared between the parties.

With a reasonable and normal level of cooperation, a matter can get to mediation within three months of your first appointment. That timing together with a very high chance your matter will resolve at mediation are handy statistics.

It is a rare day that a client actually wants to go to Court and actually wants a Judge to make a decision. But if that is what a client wants, we can help, and fight for them.

Only about one in a hundred of our clients has a matter which cannot be resolved and needs to go all the way to a Trial. That process is longer and more expensive. We find that there is a solution to nearly every matter, most often through mediation.

If you have any questions about a family law matter, or about mediation, as a TPAV member, you are entitled to a free one-

hour conference with one of our team of family lawyers.

Beyond a first free conference, if you wish to proceed further, we offer a 10% discount on our normal fees as part of our terms agreed with the Police Association of Victoria.

For further information visit berryfamilylaw.com.au or contact one of our specialist family lawyers on **(03) 9397 2488** to get started.



Berry Family Law



You may be entitled to compensation if you're attacked at work

DID YOU KNOW that police and other emergency services workers who are attacked on the job and suffer serious injuries may be entitled to compensation?

Workers' compensation covers reasonable expenses including medical, personal, occupational and rehabilitation expenses, and potentially more. As long as the worker can show some relationship between their employment and the injury or illness, they may be able to claim compensation.

Similarly, if a member dies as a result of a work-related injury or illness, their dependants can claim a compensation lump sum along with a pension.

If the death is the fault of the employer or any other person, dependants may also be able to bring a common law claim seeking damages.

Maurice Blackburn, the Association's lawyers, understands that claiming workers' compensation is a complicated and involved process – especially when you're sick or injured. But we specialise in these types of claims, so our lawyers are familiar with what you're going through and understand your needs. We make

it our mission to ensure that you get your full compensation payout to help you get back to being you as soon as possible.

Lodging a claim could result in compensation in the form of payment of your reasonable medical and like expenses, or a percentage of your pre-injury average weekly earnings.

Depending on your injury, lump sum compensation for permanent impairment might also be available and you might have an entitlement to common law damages for pain and suffering and/or loss of earnings.

You might also be able to make a superannuation claim if income protection is part of your superannuation policy, and if you're forced out of your job due to the injury, you might be entitled to a superannuation lump sum.

We offer 'no win, no fee' arrangements for these cases, which means that you

don't have to pay for our legal services if we don't win.

Maurice Blackburn can also assist if you, or a loved one, have been involved in a road accident, have a public liability or medical negligence claim, or wish to make or dispute a will. The initial consultation with all Association members is free.

For more information about how Maurice Blackburn Lawyers can help you on a no win, no charge basis, visit mauriceblackburn.com.au or free call 1800 810 812.



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