



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



The Honourable Linda Dessau AM,
Governor of Victoria

Government House
Melbourne Vic 3004

Dear Governor,

On behalf of the Council of Magistrates, I present the Magistrates' Court Annual Report for the year 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 pursuant to section 15(3) of the *Magistrates' Court Act 1989*.

Yours sincerely

JUDGE LISA HANNAN
Chief Magistrate

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUED TO IMPACT COURT OPERATIONS DURING THE YEAR, BUT I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT ALL 51 COURTS AROUND THE STATE REMAINED OPEN AND OPERATING.

Our initial response prioritised the hearing of the most urgent matters. A range of non-urgent matters were adjourned, and our focus moved to enabling people to engage with the court in new ways and increasing the volume of online hearings across all jurisdictions.

Our frontline staff and judicial officers moved into teams to ensure we could continue to provide services if a team had to isolate, while non-frontline staff worked from home.

MCV trialled an Online Magistrates' Court (OMC) in May and June 2020, which allowed parties to appear remotely via WebEx. This enabled the work of the court to continue while protecting the health and wellbeing of judicial officers, staff, stakeholders and court users.

Accelerating the availability of online hearings was essential to our COVID-19 response, and by 1 July 2020 all our staff and magistrates were trained in WebEx. This meant we were able to rapidly increase the number and range of matters that could be heard online around the state to include summary crime, first remands, committals, family violence, VOCAT, civil and WorkCover. When the community could not come to us, we took the court to them.

In addition to our online activity, I issued a number of practice directions that facilitated the hearing of a range of criminal matters on the papers, including summary pleas, sentence indications, unopposed bail variations and diversions. We moved the civil jurisdiction online, hearing contested matters as well as urgent and interlocutory matters and continued to support use of alternate dispute resolution where appropriate.

Our specialist programs including Koori Court, the Assessment and Referral Court and Drug Court also moved online, utilising technology for case management, while the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) continued to provide services, assessments and case management remotely.

While we embraced technology, it was important that our courts remained open and staffed so we were available to hear urgent and priority matters in person if needed, including family violence intervention order applications. We installed protective screens and other physical modifications in our existing court buildings to strengthen transmission prevention.

As restrictions started to ease, we increased the volume of matters being heard in regional Victoria from October and in metropolitan areas from November. We established a triage recovery team to facilitate adjourned matters being brought forward and listed online. As part of this process, we developed online plea forms that allowed court users to elect to have their matters finalised in their absence after providing detailed information.

Communication with court users was vital, particularly for the unrepresented, so more than 234,000 text messages and emails were sent to tell people what they needed to do.

We also fast-tracked the rollout of the first stage of our new case management system, eDocs, which allowed parties to file documents electronically.

As a greater number of our frontline staff, stakeholders and court users returned to our buildings in 2021, our focus moved to addressing the number of pending cases that had increased due to the reduced operating capacity across the first half of the financial year. Due to the nature of the court process, the Magistrates' Court usually has between 70,000-80,000 pending matters. This peaked at approximately 145,000 at the end of 2020 but had reduced to 127,000 by 30 June. The civil jurisdiction had largely recovered by year's end, but the recovery of the crime and family violence jurisdictions will take more time.

I am incredibly proud that the court was able to finalise more than 204,000 matters during the year in the face of unprecedented disruption. We made enormous gains in our technology capability, and mobilised and modernised court practice, enabling us to list, hear and resource our work in ways previously unimagined. Online hearings, together with active case management and triaging, will continue to be critical in our recovery.

While the risk of COVID-19 transmission remains, we cannot return to operations with crowded court buildings and court users onsite for legal advice, negotiation and hearings. This has necessitated the whole sector pivoting its model of service to accommodate this new reality, and we have been working closely with stakeholders to ensure that services are available and fit for purpose. I thank them for their support.

Despite the challenges of the past year, there have been many opportunities for positive reform. We advanced our strategic planning and released a new vision, values and strategic priorities document to guide our journey from a paper-based organisation to a modern, agile court that can operate in a digital environment.

MCV has also committed to promoting a vision of court excellence that is designed to maintain and reinforce public trust and confidence through the successful implementation of the International Framework for Court Excellence.

In July, the Attorney-General and the Chief Justice initiated a review of sexual harassment across Victorian courts, led by Dr Helen Szoke AO. The review considered measures to prevent sexual harassment, improve reporting, raise awareness and ensure accountability. As the head of this jurisdiction, I am committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive workplace that is free from harassment or bullying. Conduct of this nature will never be tolerated and we must ensure our workplace is one of respect, safety, fairness and inclusion.

The wellbeing of our judicial officers and staff is the court's highest priority, and I pledged to ensure wellbeing was embedded as a core aspect and function of court operations via the development of a health and wellbeing action plan.

It has been an incredible year and I am grateful for the support we have received from all our stakeholders, Court Services Victoria and the State Government during this time. I want to thank my judicial colleagues for their determination to continue to serve the people of Victoria no matter what the circumstances. Importantly, I want to thank our CEO, leadership team and amazing staff for their resilience, dedication and resourcefulness.

With such a dedicated and committed team, I am confident we will deliver our vision to be an innovative and accessible court delivering fair, transparent and efficient justice.

JUDGE LISA HANNAN
CHIEF MAGISTRATE

ABOUT THE MAGISTRATES' COURT OF VICTORIA

THE MAGISTRATES' COURT OF VICTORIA (MCV) IS A KEY PART OF VICTORIA'S JUSTICE SYSTEM, HEARING MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF THE CRIMINAL AND CIVIL CASES THAT COME BEFORE VICTORIAN COURTS.

The Criminal Division hears and determines summary offences and some indictable matters, as well as conducting committal hearings in relation to serious indictable offences that are determined in the County or Supreme courts. Despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19 during the year, more than 134,800 criminal cases were initiated and 126,600 criminal matters were finalised. The Civil Division hears disputes arising from debts, claims for damages and other monetary or property disputes up to the value of \$100,000. It also deals with claims for compensation for workplace injuries, and hears claims by employees and employers under the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

MCV has a dedicated and committed workforce that includes 120 magistrates working across the court's 51 locations, as well as 28 reserve magistrates, 17 judicial registrars and 935 staff.

In addition to its court operations, MCV also provides a number of specialist courts and programs that aim to improve outcomes for court users and the community. Many of those who come before the court are assessed as having underlying mental health or substance abuse issues, social or cultural disadvantage, or a disability. Our specialist courts and programs are solution-focused. They use the opportunity of an individual's participation in the justice system to prevent offending, improve wellbeing and increase community safety.

MCV's services include:

ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL COURT

The Assessment and Referral Court (ARC) is a specialist therapeutic and solution-focused court designed to ensure access to justice and improved outcomes for accused individuals who have a mental illness and/or cognitive impairment. It works collaboratively with the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) to provide a wide range of support. ARC operates on a problem-solving court model, where the magistrate hears the matters and reviews the accused person's progress in a less formal setting. A guilty plea is required before an individual support plan is developed.

BAIL AND REMAND COURT

The Bail and Remand Court (BaRC) hears bail and remand matters from across the metropolitan area, from 10am - 9pm seven days a week.

COURT INTEGRATED SERVICES PROGRAM

The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) is a statewide, court-based program that supports eligible clients to address their health and/or social needs with an aim to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. CISP works with clients during the bail (or pre-trial) stage

of their criminal proceedings. It is a voluntary program and clients are provided with individualised case management to support timely access to community-based treatment and support services, including drug and alcohol treatment, accommodation, disability or mental health services.

CISP REMAND OUTREACH PILOT

The CISP Remand Outreach Program (CROP) is a joint initiative with Corrections Victoria. CROP staff work in prisons to proactively identify remand prisoners who may be eligible for bail if appropriate community supports were in place. They work with people on remand to identify and address barriers to receiving these supports.

DRUG COURT

MCV's Drug Court sits at venues at Dandenong and Melbourne. The Drug Court provides offenders with a drug and/or alcohol dependency the option to serve a sentence of imprisonment in the community under a drug and alcohol treatment order (DATO). The intensive, integrated drug treatment program is judicially supervised and provides a therapeutic response to address the underlying causes of drug addiction. Structured to promote honesty, accountability and a change in participants' behaviour, DATO non-compliance attracts swift and significant consequences, including jail.

KOORI COURT

Koori Court is a culturally appropriate sentencing court for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander defendants who plead guilty. The Koori Court facilitates conversations with the defendant, their family and lawyer sitting around a table, directly engaging with Koori Court Elders, the magistrate, Victoria Police, Corrections and a Koori Court officer to address underlying issues. Elders and Respected Persons (ERPs) and Koori Court officers reduce cultural alienation, strengthen accountability and ensure the process is culturally safe.

NEIGHBOURHOOD JUSTICE CENTRE

The Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC) is a multijurisdictional community justice centre in Collingwood that hears cases involving residents of the City of Yarra. It resolves disputes by addressing the underlying causes of harmful behaviour and tackling social disadvantage. Magistrates hear criminal and civil matters (including VOCAT applications), as well as family violence and personal safety intervention order applications. Children's Court (criminal division) and Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) matters are also heard.

SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE COURTS

Specialist Family Violence Courts are operational at five headquarter courts. They deliver an integrated family violence response resourced with specialist magistrates, registry and family violence practitioners. Features of the SFVCs include separate entrances and safe waiting areas, remote witness technology and private interview rooms.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE TRIBUNAL

The Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) provides financial assistance to victims of violent crime to aid their recovery and to cover expenses that resulted from the crime.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC IS CERTAINLY AN INTERESTING TIME TO START A NEW JOB.

Victoria was battling the second COVID-19 wave and in a declared State of Disaster when I commenced as CEO in August. I was thrilled to join MCV as it presented an opportunity to support and work with the Chief Magistrate, judicial officers and staff to deliver innovative and accessible, world-class court services and fair, transparent and efficient justice for Victorians. I am proud that our commitment to those objectives has not wavered.

I would like to thank Elissa Scott who was acting CEO for the first few months of the financial year. Elissa steered our court through the initial months of the pandemic response and ensured we were well placed to deal with the challenges faced throughout the year.

While COVID-19 has taken up a lot of our focus this year, planning for the future has not stopped as the next few years will be crucial for MCV as we continue our journey from a paper-based court to an agile organisation operating in a digital environment.

The pandemic has given us impetus for change and modernisation, and we intend to embrace the opportunities presented by this unprecedented disruption. I thank the State Government for its support of, and investment in, many of our new initiatives including the OMC. We have a rare opportunity to pursue integrated reform and this significant investment reflects confidence in our strategic direction.

Technology will play a crucial part in the next stage of our reform journey and that will enable us to provide an even higher level of service to Victorians. But people will always remain at the core of what we do.

I want MCV to be an employer of choice, and for our people to have meaningful work, the opportunity to develop, and for our organisation to provide contemporary working conditions. COVID-19 has forever changed the way the court works, and we have been exploring what our future workplace will look like, and what approaches to flexibility can be adopted and maintained.

One of my first priorities was to build on the skills and experience in the executive leadership team, and MCV welcomed three new executive directors during the year. I thank the executive leadership group for its support. Another key priority was the creation of a new Legal Policy Unit, which undertakes research, provides high quality legal and strategic advice, and governs the court's position on legal policy matters.

MCV committed to an exciting vision for the future with the launch of our strategic priorities in November. This is an important framework as it will guide us on our journey towards court excellence. I am passionate about our future direction and ambitious vision.

I would like to thank the Chief Magistrate, Judge Hannan, for her leadership and support of me as incoming CEO, our judicial officers and our incredible people for their dedication, resilience and support. I have been so impressed by the commitment and professionalism I have seen from everyone across MCV.

SIMON HOLLINGSWORTH
CEO

THE YEAR THAT WAS



Online Magistrates' Court launched statewide



Early delivery of the eDocs portal

All 51

courts remained open during pandemic



Launch of strategic vision and values



Launch of wellbeing action plan for staff and judicial officers

290

Record one-day number of audio visual links with prisons



Two new Specialist Family Violence Courts opened



Specialist courts and services providing assessment and case management remotely

214,980

Emails and calls to the Family Violence Contact Centre

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria is led by the Chief Magistrate, Judge Lisa Hannan. Her Honour is supported by two deputy chief magistrates, supervising magistrates and regional coordinating magistrates. Through a suite of committees, the judiciary makes recommendations about the administration of the law and the running of the court to improve processes. The magistrates are supported by an administrative team, which is led by the CEO, to deliver an innovative and responsive court.

THE JUDICIARY

CHIEF MAGISTRATE

Judge Lisa Hannan

DEPUTY CHIEF MAGISTRATES

Ms Felicity Broughton
Ms Susan Wakeling

HEADS OF DIVISION

Crime Ms Donna Bakos
Specialist Courts Ms Pauline Spencer
Civil Mr Phillip Goldberg

SUPERVISING MAGISTRATES

ARC Ms Ros Porter
Drug Court Ms Suzie Cameron
Family Violence Ms Stella Stuthridge
Family Violence - Crime Mr Tim Gattuso
Industrial Mr Justin Foster
Koori Justice Ms Rose Falla
Sexual Offences Ms Jo Metcalf
VOCAT Ms Fiona Hayes
WorkCover Mr Brian Wright

REGIONAL COORDINATING MAGISTRATES

Barwon South West Ms Ann McGarvie
Broadmeadows Mr Martin Grinberg
Dandenong Ms Julie O'Donnell
Frankston Mr Gerard Lethbridge
Gippsland Ms Ann Collins
Grampians Ms Noreen Toohey
Heidelberg Ms Meagan Keogh
Hume Mr Peter Mithen
Loddon Mallee Ms Megan Aumair
Moorabbin Ms Anne Goldsbrough
Melbourne Mr Timothy Bourke
NJC Mr David Fanning
Ringwood Ms Jan Maclean
Sunshine Ms Kay Robertson

MAGISTRATES

Mr Ian Alger
Ms Marita Altman
Ms Susan Armour
Mr Julian Ayres
Mr Guillaume Bailin
Ms Hayley Bate
Mr Stephen Ballek
Ms Luisa Bazzani
Mr John Bentley
Ms Amina Bhai
Ms Jacqueline Billings (CHC)
Ms Angela Bolger
Ms Jade Bott
Ms Jennie Bowles (CHC)
Mr Gerard Bryant
Ms Abigail Burchill
Mr Anthony Burns
Ms Carolyn Burnside
Ms Alexandra Burt
Mr Darrin Cain (CHC)
Mr Andrew Capell
Ms Victoria Campbell
Mr Michael Coghlan
Mr Gregory Connellan
Ms Suzette Dootjes
Mr Peter Dotchin (CHC)
Ms Alana Duffy
Mr Peter Dunn
Ms Michelle Ehrlich (CHC)
Ms Caitlin English (CCOV)
Mr David Faram
Mr Bernard Fitzgerald
Ms Lesley Fleming (CHC)
Mr Simon Garnett
Ms Jane Gibson (CHC)
Mr Kieran Gilligan
Ms Julie Grainger
Ms Jennifer Grubissa
Mr Simon Guthrie
Mr Andrew Halse
Mr John Hardy
Ms Tara Hartnett
Ms Annabel Hawkins (CHC)
Ms Kate Hawkins
Mr Rodney Higgins

Ms Meghan Hoare
Mr Timothy Hoare
Ms Michelle Hodgson
Mr Franz Holzer
Ms Gail Hubble (CHC)
Mr Trieu Huynh
Ms Audrey Jamieson (CCOV)
Mr Graham Keil
Mr Russell Kelly
Mr Costas Killias
Dr Michael King
Mr Randall Kune (CHC)
Ms Elizabeth Langdon (CHC)
Mr Nunzio LaRosa
Mr Stephen Lee
Mr Dominic Lennon
Ms Denise Livingstone
Ms Mary-Anne MacCallum
Ms Therese McCarthy
Mr Michael McNamara
Ms Kay Macpherson (CHC)
Ms Urfa Masood
Mr Ross Maxted
Mr Andrew McKenna
Mr Gregory McNamara
Ms Sharon McRae
Ms Fran Medina
Mr Peter Mellas
Ms Helen Murphy
Ms Michelle Mykytowycz
Mr John O'Callaghan
Ms Kim Parkinson (CHC)
Mr Tony Parsons
Mr Shiva Pillai (CHC)
Mr Richard Pithouse
Ms Vicky Prapas
Mr Hugh Radford
Mr Peter Reardon
Mr Michael Richards
Mr Gregory Robinson
Ms Kristen Rose (CHC)
Mr Ron Saines
Mr Marc Sargent
Mr Paul Smith
Ms Sharon Smith (CHC)
Mr Patrick Southey
Ms Paresa Spanos (CCOV)
Mr David Starvaggi
Ms Melissa Stead (CHC)
Ms Fiona Stewart
Mr Mark Stratmann
Ms Jacinta Studham
Ms Mia Stylianou
Ms Kimberley Swadesir
Mr Charles Tan

Ms Cynthia Toose
Ms Letizia Torres
Ms Jennifer Tregent
Ms Olivia Trumble
Ms Belinda Wallington
Mr Tim Walsh
Ms Nahrain Warda
Mr Michael Wardell
Mr Ian Watkins
Mr Michael Wighton
Mr Simon Zebrowski
Mr Francis Zemljak (CHC)

RESERVE MAGISTRATES

Mr Thomas Barrett
Mr Ross Betts
Mr Barry Braun
Mr Phillip Byrne
Mr Brian Clifford
Mr Bruce Cottrill
Mr Rodney Crisp
Mr John Doherty
Ms Margaret Harding
Mr Lou Hill
Mr Jonathan Klestadt
Mr Bob Kumar
Ms Cathy Lamble
Mr John Lesser
Mr Gregory Levine
Mr Lance Martin
Mr Peter Mealy
Mr Ian McGrane
Mr Dan Muling
Mr John O'Brien
Ms Jelena Popovic
Mr Steven Raleigh
Mr Duncan Reynolds
Mr Charlie Rozencwajg
Mr Barry Schultz
Mr Michael Smith
Mr Alan Spillane
Mr Iain West

JUDICIAL REGISTRARS

Ms Ruth Andrew
Mr Julian Bartlett
Mr Mick Bolte
Ms Shannon Dellamarta
Ms Samantha Dixon
Ms Kristie Eales
Mr Gavin Green
Mr Michael Gurvich
Mr Anthony Gwynne
Ms Leah Hickey
Mr Barry Johnstone
Mr Richard O'Keefe
Ms Alison Paton
Ms Katherine Rynne
Mr Mark Sabljak
Ms Angela Soldani
Ms Allison Vaughan

CHC indicates magistrates sitting at the Children's Court, CCOV indicates magistrates sitting at the Coroners Court.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mr Simon Hollingsworth

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Business Transformation
Ms Melissa Martino
Court Operations
Ms Simone Shields
Family Violence (Acting)
Ms Melinda Stuart-Adams
People, Culture and Transformation
Ms Johanna Begbie
Specialist Courts and Programs
Ms Elissa Scott
Strategy and Corporate Services
Mr Jake Hawley

ACTING PRINCIPAL REGISTRAR

Ms Alyson Nielson

SERVICE DELIVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

LEADING CHANGE

MCV created a new workstream during the year to coordinate and drive the change required for the delivery of key technology reform projects.

The Service Delivery and Transformation team is driving the court's transition from a paper-based organisation to one that can operate in a digital environment.

The team's role is to identify and respond to existing workflow inefficiencies and develop solutions that are practical, coordinated and prioritise the experiences of court users.

The team led the implementation of MCV's innovative Online Magistrates' Court (OMC), including the introduction of a triage recovery team and active case management. This was designed to facilitate the transfer of matters to OMC and encourage pre-court engagement with services and providers, which is particularly important for unrepresented court users.

The team is also overseeing organisational readiness for the introduction of the new case management system and associated functionality, such as eDocs.

This investment is a key component of MCV's vision for excellence, and will enhance the delivery of justice for all Victorians.

EDocs DELIVERED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Delivery of MCV's new case management system reached a significant milestone in November with the launch of the eDocs portal for document lodgment.

eDocs allows external parties to lodge documents electronically with the court, reducing MCV's reliance on paper and increasing efficiency.

The rollout was brought forward to support the court's COVID recovery and the OMC.

Since then, more than 24,000 documents have been lodged via the eDocs system,

including charge and summons, preliminary briefs, certificate of service applications and notice of defence.

The second release of the \$89 million CMS project is civil, which is due for delivery in the 2021-22 financial year. MCV staff worked closely with technology partner Journal Technologies during the year to further the civil portal design and navigation.

Five subsequent stages will be released, including criminal. These are due for delivery in the 2022-23 financial year.

The project to replace MCV's outdated Courtlink system was funded under the 2017-18 State Budget, as part of the Victorian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The new system, which is also being used by the Children's Court, will strengthen the ability to capture and share critical information, supporting greater integration and connectivity for the entire justice system.

STAFF DEVICE REFRESH

To support MCV's move to online operations, all judicial officers and staff received an IT equipment bundle consisting of a new laptop, keyboard, headset and accessories.

This \$3.6 million investment replaced old devices to ensure staff and judicial officers had everything they needed to do their job, either in the office or when working from home.

Desktop computers at registry counters and in courtrooms were also refreshed.

The device rollout was a key element of the court's Health and Wellbeing Policy, which acknowledged the impact operational changes had on staff and judicial officers, and supported them to work effectively from any location.

DEDICATED FACILITIES FOR ONLINE MAGISTRATES' COURT

MCV built dedicated facilities at the William Cooper Justice Centre to support the expansion of the OMC.

While all courts around the state hold hearings online via WebEx, a dedicated online list called the Online Magistrates' Court is based at the William Cooper Justice Centre. It heard more than 2500 matters across all MCV jurisdictions during the year.

Matters are heard from hearing rooms and do not need a courtroom to proceed.

A team of judicial officers has been assigned to hear matters exclusively in the OMC. These have ranged from brief mentions to a complex occupational health and safety matter that required 20 listing days.

This matter was able to be heard without the risk of COVID disruption and without the need to utilise a courtroom that was then available to hear other matters. Parties and witnesses were trained in the use of the WebEx technology, which was also used to tender and share evidence

Magistrates sitting in the OMC list have also been able to assist regional locations manage listings at peak times, hearing matters at short notice from around the state.

NEW DAILY RECORD FOR AUDIO VISUAL LINKS

The court's audio-visual capacity further increased during the year with funding provided for the technology to be expanded to 11 additional courtrooms at Melbourne, Ringwood, Sunshine, Werribee and Frankston, and a further 13 courtrooms across regional Victoria.

One hundred and seventy five courtrooms are now equipped with the technology, enabling 48,820 links to be facilitated between courts and accused persons in custody. This is a 44 per cent increase on 2019-20.

A new daily record was set during the year with 290 links organised.

ONLINE HEARINGS BRING GREATER FLEXIBILITY

When the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court had a high number of remand matters listed on a busy day, registry staff contacted OMC to seek assistance. OMC staff at the William Cooper Justice Centre were able to secure an available magistrate from Dandenong to hear two matters. The accused appeared via WebEx from the police station where they were being held, the prosecutor and defence practitioners appeared from their offices, and the court officer who was the bench clerk facilitated the hearing from the William Cooper Justice Centre. A courtroom was not needed. Technology is providing the court with flexibility that has not previously been available.



SERVICE DELIVERY AND TRANSFORMATION

ONLINE PLEA FORMS

To assist with COVID recovery and to help reduce the number of pending matters, online plea forms were developed to assist with the management and finalisation of a range of summary matters.

Court users were able to submit these forms to notify the court how they wanted their matter to proceed. A triage recovery team processed the forms, collating information to direct matters to the proper venue. They were then booked into online hearings if they wanted to contest their matter, or a judicial officer finalised the charges in their absence if they did not want to appear.

The triage process ensured parties had engaged and consulted ahead of their online hearing booking, helping to ensure each court hearing was meaningful in progressing or finalising matters.

The website was updated to include detailed information on the process and requirements for those who were unrepresented. Court users were encouraged to undertake pre-court engagement with legal services and providers.

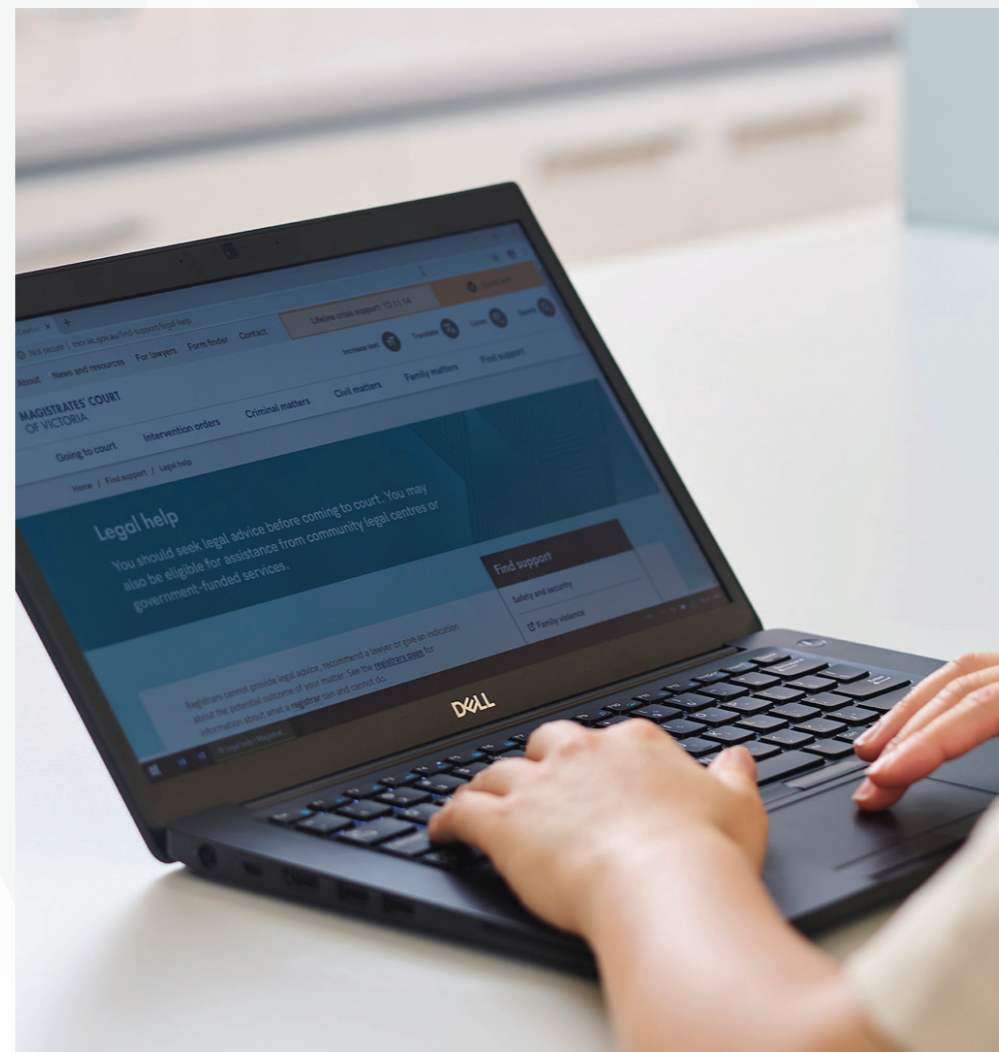
MCV also introduced a process in relation to council matters listed before judicial registrars. The accused was notified of the date on which the matter was listed and given 28 days to respond. Where no response was received, the matter was heard and the accused notified of the result, noting the option of an application for rehearing.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

MCV released an accessibility and engagement strategy during the year following the rapid adoption of technology to facilitate court hearings.

While technology has increased accessibility to justice for many court users, the strategy acknowledges that this is not universal and, for some court users, online hearings can create barriers to participating in the court process.

MCV has pledged to identify and understand these impacts and is committed to working with court users to maximise their engagement to ensure they have equal access to our courts.



STRIVING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

MCV committed to working with indigenous Victorians through the 2021-2025 Self Determination Plan, *Yaanadhan Manamith Yirramboi - Striving for a Better Tomorrow*.

This whole-of-courts plan seeks to create an inclusive environment for staff, agencies and the community, embracing the principle of self-determination. The intention is to also address Koori over-representation in the justice system by building cultural sensitivity, awareness and respect along with an understanding of values, traditions and customs.

The main aims are:

- prioritising culture
- addressing trauma and supporting healing
- addressing racism and promoting cultural safety
- transferring power and resources to communities.

Areas for action include developing a statement acknowledging, respecting and recognising Koori people; enhancing Koori involvement in leadership and strategic decision-making; developing a strategy on the integration of local protocols, language, artworks, totems and customs in courthouses and buildings to ensure they are culturally safe; and implementing cultural awareness training to support and facilitate greater understanding of self-determination.

SOIL TURNED ON NEW BENDIGO LAW COURTS

Construction commenced in November on the new multijurisdictional Bendigo Court building.

The building will be utilised by the Magistrates' Court, Children's Court and Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, with the Supreme Court and the County and Federal courts sitting on a circuit basis.

Designed to put people and community first, it will be the first court in Victoria to deliver all specialist court services, including Koori Court, a Specialist Family Violence Court, the ARC list and Drug Court.

The target service model emphasises person-centred service delivery with a particular focus on assisting court users to navigate the system, triage and assessment of individual needs, and proactive case management.

Advanced technology will enable wayfinding, remote hearings, display of digital evidence, video conferencing and live streaming.

The Chief Magistrate, Judge Lisa Hannan, attended a smoking ceremony on site in April to mark a design collaboration with Bendigo's Traditional Owners, the Dja Wurrung.

The \$152.4 million project was funded in the 2019-20 State Budget. It is on track for completion in late 2022 with court operations to commence in early 2023.

WYNDHAM TO GET STATE-OF-THE-ART COURT FACILITIES

Planning for a new state-of-the-art court facility at Werribee is well underway with the State Budget committing \$271.1 million for construction of the Wyndham Law Courts.

Wyndham will be the largest court complex outside Melbourne's CBD, bringing together multiple court jurisdictions.

It will deliver specialist courts and programs, including family violence services to meet the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, drug and mental health assessment and referral court services, and culturally sensitive services for the Koori community.

Construction is scheduled to commence in late 2022 and will be completed in 2024.

VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

A BOLD VISION FOR THE FUTURE

MCV launched its vision, values and strategic priorities document in November.

Designed to deliver on the vision to be “an innovative and accessible court delivering fair, transparent and efficient justice for all Victorians”, this important framework will guide MCV’s planning over the next two years.

It focuses on six key areas: achieving court excellence, leadership and professionalism, technology, communication and engagement, wellbeing and COVID-19 recovery planning.

It is designed to prioritise people and their experience of the justice system while maintaining and reinforcing public trust and confidence in the court.

MCV’s values:



EXCELLENCE

Striving for excellence in performance of our work.



RESPECT

People are listened to and treated with courtesy and respect.



INTEGRITY

Honest, ethical and reasonable behaviour.



FAIRNESS

Ensure due process and equal protection of the law.



TRANSPARENCY

Promote trust and confidence in the work of the court by upholding principles of open justice, engaging with community and being accountable for our use of public resources.



ACCESSIBILITY

Ensuring the court’s practices and processes are clear, consistent, user-friendly and non-discriminatory. Making the court physically available to all.



INNOVATION

Being a leader in innovative court practices and leveraging technology to increase our accessibility and support our reform agenda.



INCLUSIVENESS

A court for all Victorians that is respectful of culture and diversity.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COURT EXCELLENCE

Over the past year, MCV has been working to implement positive changes in line with the vision, values and strategic priorities.

A key component of the strategic plan is adopting the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE).

Developed by the International Consortium for Court Excellence, the framework is a set of values, concepts and tools to provide a foundation for improving the quality of justice and judicial administration.

Underpinning the journey to court excellence are 10 court values and seven areas of court excellence that provide clear guidance for courts seeking a strategic approach to reform and continuous improvement.

The court values are:

- equality before the law
- fairness
- impartiality
- independence
- competence
- integrity
- transparency
- accessibility
- timeliness
- certainty.

The seven areas of court excellence are:



LEADERSHIP



STRATEGIC COURT MANAGEMENT



WORKFORCE



INFRASTRUCTURE, PROCEEDINGS AND PROCESSES



COURT USER ENGAGEMENT



AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE COURT SERVICES



PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

IFCE is a continuous improvement process (assess, analyse, implement and evaluate) that MCV will implement over 18 months and repeat every two years.

The process commenced in May with an assessment of MCV’s performance against the seven areas of court excellence. Sixty-nine per cent of staff and judicial officers contributed their insights. The results will be analysed in the 2021-22 financial year and inform the development of an improvement plan to build on MCV’s strengths to deliver public trust and confidence in the court.



CIVIL DIVISION

MCV's Civil Division comprises three main jurisdictions:

- General Civil deals with proceedings where the disputed amount does not exceed \$100,000 or, in the case of equitable relief, the value of the relief does not exceed \$100,000
- WorkCover, which is the jurisdiction conferred by the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*, the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* and the *Workers Compensation Act 1958*
- proceedings within the Industrial jurisdiction.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Civil Division adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic by moving from in-person to mainly online hearings. The response required the development of new practice directions, providing ongoing access to justice.

NEW RULES

The Magistrates Court (General Civil Procedure) Rules 2020 and *The Magistrates' Court (Miscellaneous Civil Procedure) Rules 2020* were developed in consultation with the Civil Practice Committee. They came into force on 1 October and were a significant update of the 2010 Rules. The changes included updated language to better reflect consistency with other courts and community standards, the inclusion of an interpreters' code of conduct and simplified forms.

Processes in relation to Appropriate Dispute Resolution were also modernised, evidence can now be given by way of summary in all motor vehicle property damage claims, and rules in relation to medical reports in WorkCover matters were updated.

NEW FEDERAL JURISDICTION

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and Other Acts Amendment (Federal Jurisdiction and Other Matters) Bill 2021 was introduced into the parliament on 25 May. It is aimed at providing access to justice for those who would have been excluded from VCAT proceedings. MCV is working to implement the jurisdiction as soon as possible.

CIVIL PRACTICE COMMITTEE

The Civil Practice Committee met regularly during the year. It includes representatives from the court's judiciary and administration, and the profession including the Victorian Bar and the Law Institute of Victoria. The committee consults on rules, processes and procedures. The committee appreciates the invaluable support of the Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel who attends these meetings.

JUDICIAL REGISTRAR CIVIL JURISDICTION EXPANDED

The jurisdiction of judicial registrars was expanded in 2020. They now have jurisdiction up to \$25,000 in general matters, including fencing disputes and \$100,000 in motor vehicle property damage claims. The increased jurisdiction broadens the judicial resource available to respond to growing demands.

WORKCOVER

The WorkCover Division consults regularly with the WorkCover Users Group, which represents the profession and stakeholders. The aim is to enhance access to justice. The division has reviewed practice and procedure and continued the development of regional circuits for 2022. The review developed a response to COVID-19 reflected in the move to online hearings and the streamlining

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

DELIVERING AN ACTION PLAN

Our people are our greatest strength. Recognising this, a Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee was established in July 2020 to provide advice to the Chief Magistrate and CEO about what more can be done to support our people.

A key task of the committee was to prepare a plan to ensure the health and wellbeing of judicial officers and staff.

The plan covers physical and mental health along with the environment and culture of the workplace, and is in line with the International Framework for Court Excellence.

A key focus has been the impact of COVID-19 on judicial officers and staff.

Actions, expected outcomes and success measurement factors were identified and progress has been made with 33 of the 59 actions either commenced or on track. Five have been completed and the remaining 20 are set to get underway.

One action completed was the device rollout project across all courts, which drew a positive response from staff on the delivery of their work-issued devices. Judicial officers also received ergonomic assessment and advice.

Thirty-four staff completed mental health first aid training with 26 assessed and accredited. MCV now has 62 accredited mental health first aiders. Fourteen judicial officers have also taken part in the training, including the Chief Magistrate, 11 magistrates and three judicial registrars.

Magistrates in leadership roles took part in an interactive program in October, which was aimed at giving them the skills to maximise the wellbeing of those they lead. The Judicial College of Victoria delivered the two 90-minute sessions: one for regional leaders and the other for those in the suburban courts and at Melbourne.

Health appraisals were offered to staff at court sites across the state, with 214 of the 30-minute physical and mental checks carried out. Six judicial officers also had health checks.

The Judicial Officer Assistance and Judicial Proactive Wellbeing programs also provided confidential assistance and support by psychologists.

The Audit and Risk Committee approved a risk treatment plan for the occupational health and safety and psychosocial wellbeing for judicial officers and staff.

A survey to ask staff their opinions on future ways of working was conducted in March 2021.

A pilot for a training program to assist managers to lead a mentally healthy workplace was also held. It was attended by eight members of the executive leadership group and also two magistrates. Following the success of the initial session, the program was subsequently expanded to include eight training sessions that were attended by 97 managers.

The next steps include the development of a mental health and wellbeing e-learning module for staff, a rewards and recognition program, and training for managers on performance management.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

The Criminal Division of the Magistrates' Court was established under a new governance model that was implemented in May.

CRIMINAL LAW COMMITTEE

The Criminal Division has been active in listening and responding to stakeholder feedback. The Criminal Law Committee sat monthly to discuss matters relating to operations, practice and procedure. Chaired by the Head of Division, Magistrate Donna Bakos, it comprises magistrates and court staff to ensure the Criminal Division is meeting the standards expected of a court of excellence.

CRIMINAL COURT USER GROUP

Magistrate Bakos chaired the Criminal Court User Group, comprising stakeholders including Victoria Police, the Victorian Office of Public Prosecutions, Victoria Legal Aid, the Victorian Bar Association, the Law Institute of Victoria, and the Independent Prosecutors Directorate. This forum provides a valuable opportunity for discussion and feedback.

JUDICIAL INDUCTION MANUALS

Judicial induction manuals were created to assist newly appointed magistrates and judicial registrars to navigate the wide range of criminal matters that come before the Magistrates' Court. The manuals are comprehensive points of reference that provide practical assistance to new appointees.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Under the new governance model, divisions are now supported by a lawyer and an online court officer. These roles are a valuable addition to the structure of the Criminal Division.

ACTION PLAN

The Criminal Division has embraced IFCE through the development of an action plan that seeks to further MCV's vision, values and strategic priorities. This plan will inform the division's direction moving forward, including striving to work in accordance with the seven areas of court excellence identified by IFCE.

LAW REFORM CONSULTATION

The Criminal Division regularly participates in law reform consultations on behalf of MCV. Magistrate Bakos has consulted extensively to ensure that the views of the Magistrates' Court are well represented. This has included discussions with the Department of Justice and Community Safety in relation to a number of significant reforms:

- improving victims' experience of summary criminal proceedings
- review of court powers to make non-disclosure orders
- review of the *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003*
- review of Victoria's criminal organisation laws
- *Sentencing Act 1991* reform project
- the new scheme created by the *Spent Convictions Act 2021*
- summary appeals reform
- victim privacy orders under the *Judicial Proceedings Reports Amendment Bill 2021*.

The Criminal Division has also contributed to several Victorian Law Reform Commission references, including *Improving the Response of the Justice System to Sexual Offences and Stalking*.

CIVIL DIVISION

of processes. The division has helped develop a unified Civil Practice Direction involving dependence compensation approvals and the subpoenaing and inspection of medical records.

INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

The Industrial Division has designed a process to implement *The Wage Theft Act 2020*, which is aimed at punishing and deterring employers who deliberately and dishonestly withhold employee entitlements and fail to keep or falsify employment records. An early intervention fast-track model will enable workers, particularly vulnerable workers, to recover unpaid monies. A trained judicial registrar with industrial relations expertise will conduct negotiation and conciliation as the first step. If matters cannot be resolved, civil proceedings will follow with a registrar or magistrate depending on the amount of money involved.

APPROPRIATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Appropriate Dispute Resolution Committee is a consultative body that includes members of the judiciary and court administration, the Victorian Bar, the Law Institute, and the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria. The committee initially met in February and considered the criteria for inclusion and protocols for the Single List of External Mediators. These included duration and cost of mediation, clarification of mediation processes and management.

DIVISIONAL LAWYER

The role of Civil Division lawyer was created in 2020. It covers the provision of legal advice on policy, processes and rules of the court. The divisional lawyer develops continuing legal education resources and consults both internally and externally. The *Judicial Immersion Guide*, a comprehensive reference document for magistrates, has been developed along with a unified practice direction post-COVID-19. Development of MCV's response to the new Federal jurisdiction and the Wage Theft Act has been a substantial part of the divisional lawyer's work.

ONLINE COURT OFFICER

The court identified a need for focused assistance to judicial leadership, appointing an online court officer to assist the head of jurisdiction, relieving registry staff of some case management duties and enhancing the efficiency of in-court proceedings. The role provides a consistent face to the profession and the community, and significantly supports the work of the head of division.

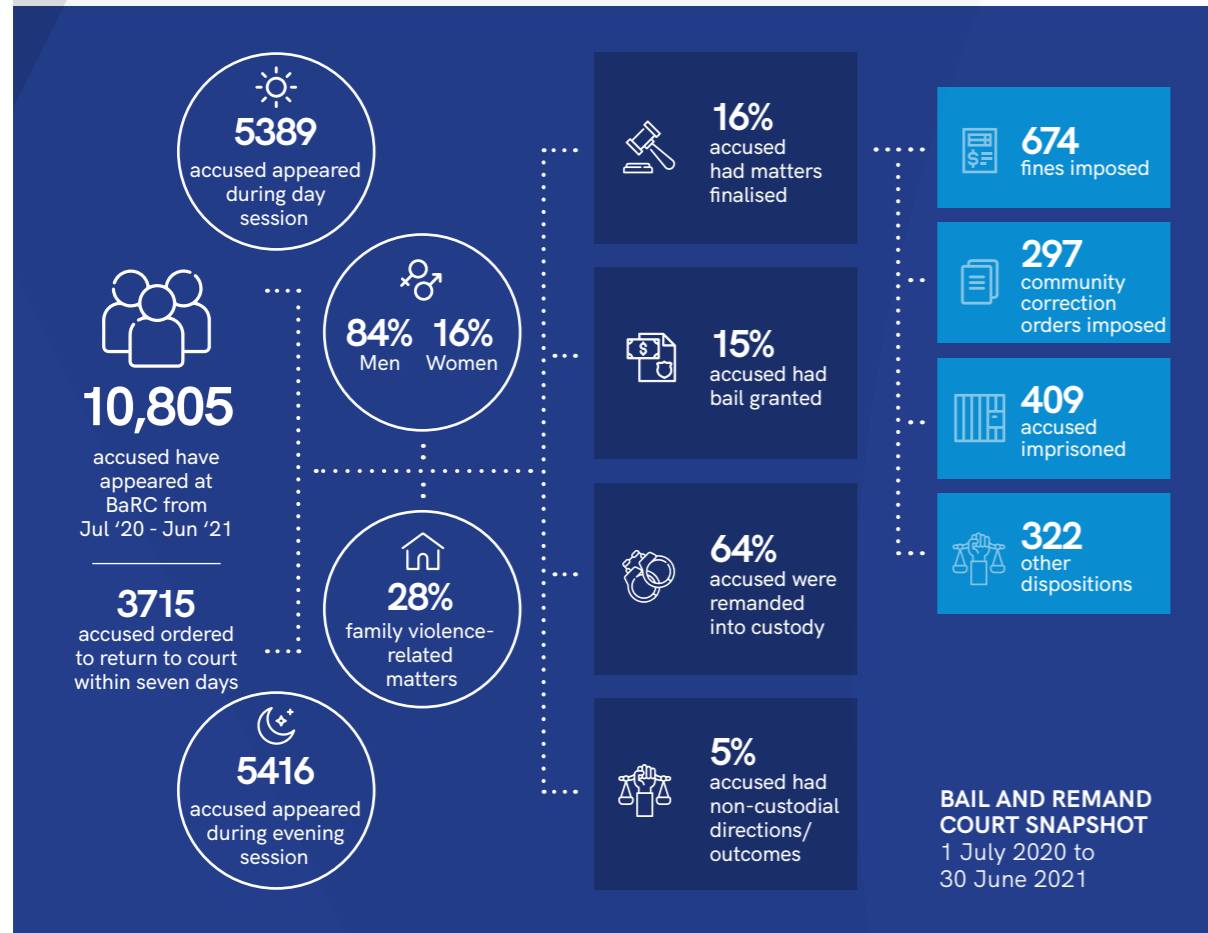
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and strong support of the following people: co-ordinators Stephanie Goldis (General Civil), Samantha Baxter and Renee Konstantellos (WorkCover), divisional lawyer Rachel Matulis and online court officer Meg Stevenson.

MAGISTRATE PHILLIP GOLDBERG

Head of the Civil Division

CRIMINAL DIVISION



FAMILY VIOLENCE CRIME PORTFOLIO

This new portfolio was created in July and covers summary and indictable offences proceeding in the summary jurisdiction, arising from family violence incidents. This includes proceedings for contravention of family violence intervention orders, and associated criminal offences alleged to have been committed in a family violence setting, such as assault and injury offences, criminal damages, stalking, aggravated burglary, endangerment and threat offences, and use of telecommunications to harass or menace.

Supervising Magistrate Timothy Gattuso has provided regular reports to the magistracy on legislative issues and relevant family violence case law, as well as conducting training seminars for sentencing in family violence crime

to promote consistency of practice and uniformity across metropolitan and regional venues.

He has also worked closely with the MCV's Family Violence Division to commence an investigation into the potential expansion of electronic monitoring as a condition of bail, and increasing its use as a condition in community correction orders and parole.

The portfolio has collaborated with the Judicial College of Victoria to write amendments to the *Family Violence Crime Bench Book* and provided input on the conduct of ground rules hearings and the use of intermediaries for child and cognitively impaired witnesses in family violence offences.

It has also consulted with the legal profession to raise issues of policy and

procedure, while also providing assistance to draft policies and memorandums. The portfolio has also represented MCV on a range of committees, including the External Agencies Family Violence Committee, Family Violence Portfolio Group and the Directly Recorded Evidence in Chief and Body Worn Camera Steering Group.

SEXUAL OFFENCES PORTFOLIO

The Sexual Offences Portfolio has undertaken a significant number of projects to ensure that the Criminal Division maintains a consistently high standard of court excellence.

Led by Supervising Magistrate Johanna Metcalf, the portfolio has monitored and adapted lists and hearing processes to respond with agility to the ever-changing COVID-19 requirements as well as providing updates for magistrates about recent case law and legislative changes in the area of sexual offences.

The portfolio has overseen implementation of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009*, s123 committal process whereby matters involving child or cognitively impaired complainants proceed directly to the County Court (upon satisfaction of the committal test) by way of straight hand-up brief.

Magistrate Metcalf also chaired bi-monthly meetings of the Sexual Offences Management Committee, which has representatives from all headquarter court venues. This committee oversees the sexual offences lists in metropolitan and regional court venues.

The portfolio also introduced Practice Direction 23 of 2020, which outlined the supporting materials to be used in ground rules hearings where no intermediary had been appointed, and has been working to finalise a comprehensive *Sex Offences Case Management Guide* to assist magistrates in managing sexual offence matters in the Magistrates' and Children's courts.

In the law reform sphere, the interests of the portfolio have been well represented in many reform opportunities. This includes:

- contributions to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's *Improving the Response of the Justice System to Sexual Offences*
- reforms to the *Judicial Proceedings Reports Act 1958*, including the development of a Magistrates' Court *Judicial Proceedings Reports Act Manual* and the application form for complainants in sexual offence matters seeking permission for their identity to be published.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the 2020-21 reporting period, the Criminal Division has met the many challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic with determination. Supervising Magistrates Gattuso and Metcalf have worked tirelessly within their portfolios and I thank them for their professionalism, dedication and commitment. Divisional lawyer Michael Nguyen has been an extraordinary contributor, as has court officer Kallista Do.

The work of the Criminal Division could not progress without the efforts of the Legislative and Operational Support Team, which consults and advises on the practical implications of operationalising legislative changes. The team is led by Tanya Turner, and I wish to thank them for their diligence and support in drafting court documents, recording orders, implementing system changes and preparing communications for the benefit of judiciary and staff.

MAGISTRATE DONNA BAKOS

Head of the Criminal Division

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION

This year marks the first year of MCV's Specialist Courts Division. This new governance arrangement will bring about greater integration and collaboration across MCV by bringing together mainstream court support programs, specialist courts, the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal and the Family Violence jurisdiction.

This year has been challenging for the Specialist Courts Division as judiciary and staff have worked hard to innovate, expand and strive for excellence all while managing COVID response and recovery.

COVID RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

The Specialist Courts Division has been able to continue to serve Victorians through the adoption of technology and other new ways of working.

CISP (the bail support program) continued to provide services at all existing sites throughout COVID-19 restrictions.

Extensive work was undertaken to ensure

DRUG COURT STATISTICS

2020-2021	Dandenong	Melbourne	Total
DATOs - imposed	52	67	119
DATOs* - active participants	95	174	269
Graduations	11	13	24
Completions	8	7	15
Cancellations	27	57	85
DATOs not suitable or refused	26	22	48
Sitting days via WebEx	159	301	460

*Figures include both imposed DATOs and active participants

clients were appropriately managed with magistrates and participants properly supported. There were 3637 client referrals during the year, which was only 10.9 per cent down on the previous year.

DRUG COURT

The Drug Court program developed a modified service delivery model. There were 159 sitting days via WebEx at Dandenong and 301 at Melbourne. Clinical, supervision and counselling appointments and a range of other therapeutic activities were delivered online. Despite the restrictions, 24 participants graduated from the program. As a result of new legislation, the term drug and alcohol treatment order (DATO) is now used rather than DTO. The court issued 52 DATOs at Dandenong and 67 at Melbourne.

ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL COURT

The Assessment and Referral Court (ARC), a specialist court for people with mental

ARC STATISTICS

Location	Referral (# of clients)		Acceptance (# of clients)		Acceptance rate (%)	
	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21
Frankston	31	24	17	4	55	20
Latrobe Valley	64	46	22	16	34	28
Moorabbin	20	16	10	8	50	47
Melbourne	61	41	35	30	57	59

*Latrobe Valley includes ARC at the Korumburra and Wonthaggi Magistrates' Courts

impairment experiencing substantially reduced capacity, continued to sit in Melbourne, Moorabbin, Frankston and the Latrobe Valley. During lockdowns when ARC participants could not attend court venues, the ARC team connected remotely by telephone or by WebEx, often working collaboratively with community supports to assist people to connect.

Case managers continued to work with participants remotely. There were 58 new clients accepted into ARC, with 31 completing the program.

KOORI COURT

The Koori Court shifted to an approved remote model in August after being suspended due to COVID-19. ERPs, court officers and staff took part in online training to provide them with the skills they needed to ensure continued access to culturally appropriate justice.

A recovery plan was devised, identifying 147 accused across the state with more than 500 cases to be finalised. The backlog was effectively cleared by February.

Koori Courts continued to operate, albeit in the modified way. Court staff and judiciary worked hard to ensure all Koori people coming to court had access to cultural support during their proceedings.

NEIGHBOURHOOD JUSTICE CENTRE

NJC magistrates and staff remained on-site for remote hearings and in-person hearings for clients where online court was not possible. Clients received case management online, but on-site support was available for those in custody or with complex psychological or social issues.

NJC brought together representatives from 34 community and government organisations to set up a COVID-19 community response network. It looked at food security, digital access and literacy, lockdown planning, unemployment, and youth engagement. The NJC social enterprise kiosk, Just Bites, remained open in between lockdowns, to provide nutritious meals to clients. Artists transformed the NJC into a community art gallery as part of the urban campfire program. Works from online art projects involving 50 residents were displayed at the North Richmond housing estate.

VOCAT

Remote hearings in VOCAT enabled victims of crime to connect into their hearing from their home or other supportive environments, reducing the stress of physical attendance.

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

Advancements in the use of technology provided other opportunities to innovate.

In May, CISP rolled out a new way of managing referrals and assessments through a centralised clearing house using an online portal to track and manage referrals and assessment needs around the state each day. This, coupled with the ability to conduct assessments remotely, enabled resources to be directed each day to the areas of highest need, increasing the timeliness of assessments, reducing time for accused people on remand and minimising the need for court adjournments.

Technology also provided us with ways of connecting for professional development and community engagement.

Koori Court officers held two days of online training in December for community members wanting to become ERPs, while the biannual conference for ERPs was also held online. Supervising Magistrate Falla opened the conference and led discussions on colonisation and the impact of past policies. Elders met around tables, dialling in local community members before joining a statewide meeting. Other topics included upholding community cultural values, the MCV strategic plan, support for the cultural conversation and operational best practices.

A range of education sessions were also held online for judiciary and staff. In May new magistrates and registrars received cultural induction training via an in-person and online program.

VOCAT supported judiciary to develop their practice by connecting from around the state with regular practice sessions.

NJC education programs were delivered online, attracting 1788 participants who tuned in to learn about the community justice model.

The Specialist Courts Division participated in online community events for Law Week with Magistrate Falla presenting on Koori Court and Magistrate Porter presenting on ARC.

EXPANSION AND INVESTMENT

CISP was expanded to indictable crime and the County Court in November. This interjurisdictional collaboration expanded the proven CISP program and ensured continuity of case management for an accused transitioning to the County Court.

County Court and MCV collaborated on the development of the County Court Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court and the work towards the forthcoming regional expansion of Drug Courts to Shepparton and Ballarat.

Dandenong Drug Court relocated to a new building in October, featuring interview and counselling rooms, drug and alcohol testing facilities and secure offices for staff. It was opened by the Attorney-General, Jaclyn Symes, in May.

In February, the Royal Commission into Mental Health recognised the effectiveness of ARC, including improving people's wellbeing, reduction in risk of re-offending and improved community safety. ARC also reduces the over-representation of people with mental illness in Victoria's prisons.

The Heidelberg Koori Court was officially opened in April. The launch was live-streamed and began with a smoking ceremony by Uncle Colin Hunter. Supervising Magistrate Falla conducted the event, with Chief Magistrate Judge Hannan, Aunty Linda Bamblett and Magistrate Meagan Keogh also speaking.

Speakers reflected on the history of the Heidelberg Court and the importance of the new court to the local community. There are now 12 Koori Courts across the state, with plans for others at Wodonga, Wangaratta, Echuca and Bendigo.

The Neighbourhood Justice Centre continued to innovate developing a peacemaking service, a young adult list, a pre-charge diversion program and a digital triage system.

VOCAT simplified the process of online applications and made it easier to access online psychological counselling. The tribunal awarded a record \$57,508,632 and \$6,451,530 in legal costs.

In September 2018, the Victorian Government made an election commitment to replace the existing judicial model with an administrative scheme to align with best practice and build greater confidence in the system.

The new Financial Assistance Scheme is due to commence in 2023. VOCAT also engaged project managers to plan for a smooth and efficient transition to the new scheme.

DAVID'S STORY*

In 2021, the CISP team received an email from David, who had participated in the program a decade ago.

At the time, David presented with significant risk of injury or death due to substance abuse, which was a combination of illicit substances, alcohol and prescription medication. He was also experiencing significant mental health issues, problem gambling and reported severe memory and cognitive difficulties, however, he had no formal diagnosis.

The CISP team worked with David to understand his needs. CISP arranged a neuro-psychological assessment, which resulted in a diagnosis of acquired brain injury. This diagnosis, alongside treatment support and connection with the right services, assisted David to understand why he was struggling with aspects of his life, and the sorts of tools and support he needed to help him to achieve his goals, including ceasing to use heroin and all pharmacotherapy treatment (methadone) by the time he was 40, remaining out of jail, not offending, and improving his overall health and wellbeing.

In the email, David shared how grateful he was for the support and care he received during his time with CISP, which enabled him to turn his life around. He has remained drug free and has not been in trouble or in prison since. David told the team he didn't recognise the person in his old reports, but is now a happy, honest, healthy and productive person again.

In the 2020-21 financial year the CISP program worked with 2008 clients, with 47 per cent successfully completing their program and achieving goals they identified.

*Name has been changed

"Koori Courts improve outcomes for Koori people, and they improve participation rates by harnessing Koori community expertise."

- Chief Magistrate Judge Lisa Hannan

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION FAMILY VIOLENCE

MCV has continued delivering on its commitment to transform the justice response to family violence, implementing significant reform initiatives, and enhancing the court experience for families living with violence. Extensive work has been completed to improve and change how the courts respond to family violence. This includes continuing to implement the remaining six court-led recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The jurisdiction responded with innovation and agility to ensure the effective continuation of service delivery throughout the coronavirus restrictions.

This included:

- prioritising the hearing of all applications for interim family violence intervention orders and personal safety intervention orders across the jurisdiction using WebEx
- prioritising urgent family violence intervention interim orders to be heard on the papers where supported by declaration of truth or affidavit
- transitioning daily coordination and triage meetings to an online setting to support risk management of cases listed before the court
- introducing online accessible information sheets and forms to allow early referrals to legal and support services, and prepare for online hearings
- processing family violence intervention order applications by telephone and video technology to prepare parties to appear in their court hearing remotely and online
- transitioning family violence practitioner engagement, including specialist Koori and LGBTIQ+ services, to remote delivery modes via telephone and/or video technology

- Koori family violence services engaged local stakeholders/services online to support continued accessibility and community engagement
- provided parties with access to court when required due to safety considerations.

SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE COURTS

Two Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVC) commenced sitting during the year: Heidelberg on 10 May and Frankston on 7 June. This expansion marked a significant milestone for the family violence reform program, concluding the first stage of the SFVC implementation. SFVCs are now operational at five headquarter courts: Ballarat, Frankston, Heidelberg, Moorabbin and Shepparton.

The SFVCs deliver an integrated family violence response resourced with specialist magistrates, registry staff and family violence practitioners. Features of the SFVCs include separate entrances and safe waiting areas, remote witness technology and private interview rooms.

In May, the State Government announced \$78 million to expand SFVCs Division to an additional seven court locations.

PRE-COURT ENGAGEMENT

In December, the State Government announced \$7.75 million to launch a new pre-court engagement model, delivered with Victoria Police, Victoria Legal Aid and community legal services. The model aims to increase pre-court legal advice and support to resolve family violence intervention order (FVIO) matters before the court listing day.

The pre-court engagement service provides early engagement with court users to facilitate referrals to appropriate legal and support services and prepare for family violence matters. Following a successful pilot at Frankston Magistrates' Court, the service expanded to eight headquarter courts: Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Frankston, Latrobe Valley, Melbourne, Ringwood, Sunshine and Werribee. Since the program commenced in May 2021, 1104 pre-court engagement forms were processed, and more than 300 referrals made to legal and support services.

MULTI-AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) framework is being implemented jointly across MCV and the Children's Court to increase the safety and wellbeing of Victorian families by effectively assessing, identifying and managing family violence risk.

The framework establishes a system-wide shared understanding of what family violence is and how to respond to it. There was a significant investment in the development of learning materials and video resources to support MARAM implementation this year. Foundational MARAM training has been developed and delivered to 999 court staff across three competency levels: comprehensive,

intermediate and identify and respond. In September 2020, the family violence applicant practitioner workforce commenced applying MARAM-aligned risk assessment and management in practice.

INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME

MCV is among the agencies prescribed to the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme. The scheme provides the authorising framework for information sharing to support improved assessment and management of family violence risk. MCV received 28,267 requests for information from prescribed information sharing entities in the 2020-21 financial year, averaging 113 requests per day. In April, MCV was prescribed to the Child Information Sharing Scheme, receiving 41 requests for information under the scheme.

LGBTIQ+ PRACTITIONER SERVICES

MCV continues to build on its commitment to deliver inclusive and tailored services and programs, with the LGBTIQ+ Practitioner Service pilot transitioning to an ongoing program.

It provides accessible and integrated services to LGBTIQ+ people who engage with MCV for family violence matters. The LGBTIQ+ program expanded this year to provide an in-court support and service model at Heidelberg, Melbourne and the Neighbourhood Justice Centre, with remote support available around the state.

UMALEK BALIT

Umalek Balit is MCV's dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence support program. Meaning "give strength" in Woiwurrung, the language of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations, Umalek Balit provides culturally safe and appropriate, non-legal support

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION FAMILY VIOLENCE

for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing the court for family violence matters.

The Umalek Balit program supports safety planning for affected family members, provides flexible support packages, including tailored financial assistance, and strengthens integration with community support services. The program also enables meaningful and culturally appropriate respondent engagement, improving respondent intervention responses to support behaviour change.

The Koori family violence practitioner services provided 401 engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across five courts: Ballarat, Heidelberg, Mildura, Melbourne and Shepparton. Of those engagements, 62 per cent were applicants and 38 per cent were respondents.

KOORI COURT INTERVENTION ORDER BREACHES PILOT

A pilot program at Mildura enabling the Koori Court to hear breaches of family violence intervention orders concluded at the end of the financial year. Although the pilot was suspended for the first four months of the year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Koori Court heard five FVIO breaches once sitting resumed via online hearings in October.

ONLINE INTERVENTION ORDER APPLICATION FORM

In February 2020, MCV launched an online family violence intervention order application form to enhance accessibility for affected family members needing to apply for an intervention order. The online form has been designed as a simpler and quicker version of the paper-based form and can be accessed from any electronic device. This year, 8164 online

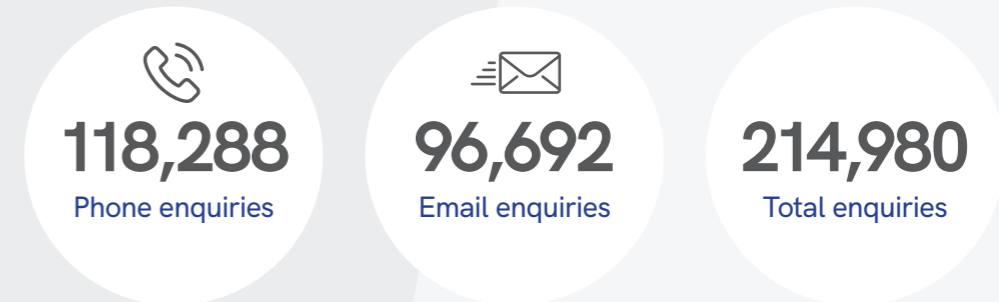
applications were lodged via the online form. Substantial planning has commenced to enhance reporting capability and to expand the online form to include personal safety intervention orders and extend, vary, or revoke applications, with an aim to be operational in the next financial year.

CONTACT CENTRE

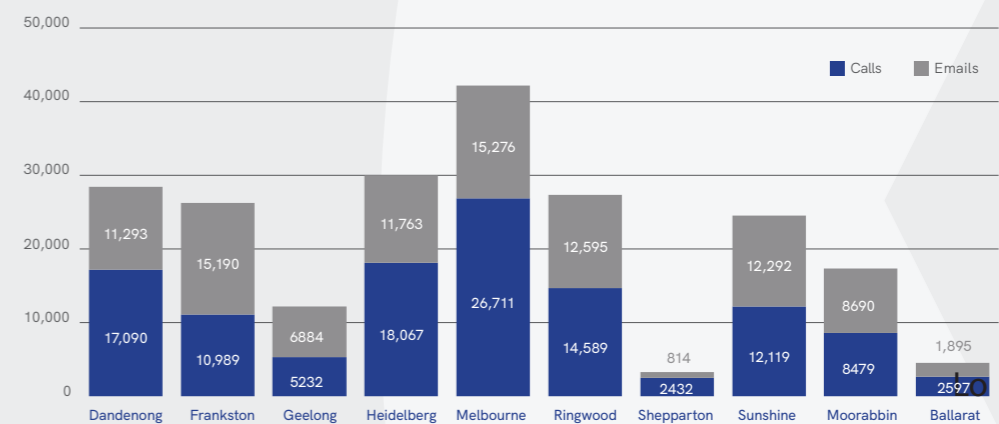
The Family Violence Contact Centre (FVCC) is a centralised unit delivering timely and responsive information to court users and service providers contacting the court by phone or email for matters relating to family violence and personal safety intervention orders. The service helps ensure families living with violence have the information they need to access justice, and improves the efficiency of the court process.

During the year, the FVCC expanded operations to Ballarat and Moorabbin so it now services 10 headquarter courts: Ballarat, Dandenong, Frankston, Geelong, Heidelberg, Melbourne, Moorabbin, Ringwood, Shepparton and Sunshine. Since 2018, demand has continued to grow, with the FVCC receiving 214,980 enquiries this year — 118,288 via phone and 96,692 through email. This was an increase of 137 per cent on the previous year.

CONTACT CENTRE STATISTICS



Total calls and emails by court



COURT MANDATED COUNSELLING ORDER PROGRAM

Robert* turned his life around with the support of the Court Mandated Counselling Order Program, changing his behaviour to be a better partner and father for his kids.

In April 2016, prior to the implementation of the SFVCs, Robert was a respondent to a family violence intervention order. He was directed to attend a men's behaviour-change program but failed the program twice due to poor attendance and was sent back to court.

When Robert returned to court, his hearing took place in the new SFVC. Robert asked the magistrate for another chance and promised to turn his life around to have a healthier relationship with his partner and family. He was ordered to participate in the new Court Mandated Counselling Order Program, available through the SFVC.

With the significant support and case management provided, Robert successfully completed the program. He sent a letter of thanks to the magistrate and court staff who gave him another chance and supported him to change his behaviour to be a better partner and a better father to his kids.

*Name has been changed

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION FAMILY VIOLENCE

LGBTIQ+ PRACTITIONER SERVICES

Samantha* was listed as the female respondent for two separate family violence intervention order matters. Based on the information provided during the application process, the matter was referred to the family violence practitioner service at the local court.

Ahead of the court hearing, the respondent completed a Notice of Address form, in which they provided a different first name, Storm. The respondent also identified as a transgender male with pronouns he/him and requested support from the LGBTIQ+ Practitioner Service.

When the court registrar received the form, they made a referral to the LGBTIQ+ practitioner team. The LGBTIQ+ family violence respondent practitioner engaged with Storm to assess his support needs, undertake risk assessment and safety planning activities, and discuss appropriate referral services, including gender identity support services. The LGBTIQ+ practitioner updated court records to reflect Storm's name and gender to ensure the name and pronouns used by the respondent were accurately recorded.

The practitioner continued to engage with Storm throughout the FVIO matter to ensure risk assessment and safety planning remained current, and appropriate referrals were made to address his needs and support behaviour change.

*Name has been changed.



REMOTE HEARING PILOT

MCV received funding during the year to expand access to remote hearings to 10 non-court locations. The remote hearing service, delivered in partnership with Family Safety Victoria and Victoria Police, enables family violence victim survivors to participate remotely in their court hearing from an off-site location. Following a successful pilot in Geelong in 2019-20, the model will build on the pilot project learnings and reflect the change in court practices resulting from the transition to online court hearings. Planning is underway for the expansion of this service in 2021-22.

FAMILY VIOLENCE TRAINING

MCV continued to enhance family violence knowledge, skills and expertise across the workforce. Training delivery rapidly transitioned to the online environment and e-learning to enable ongoing capability development throughout coronavirus restrictions.

Twenty-nine family violence training sessions were delivered to trainee court registrars, providing an overview of the nature and dynamics of family violence and introduction to family violence-related court processes. Eighty-four registry staff completed specialist family violence training across 26 sessions, to align operational practice to the SFVC operating model.

Dedicated services: The safe waiting area (left) at the new Heidelberg SFVC.

COURT MANDATED COUNSELLING ORDER PROGRAM

The Court Mandated Counselling Order Program (CMCOP) is the court's mandated men's behavioural change program. This program is instrumental in keeping perpetrators in view and addressing the barriers to behaviour change.

CMCOP service providers continued to facilitate programs throughout lockdowns but in-person service was limited for part of the year. In collaboration with Family Safety Victoria, No To Violence and service providers, a modified intervention program was introduced to enable the program to continue online. The 2021-22 State Budget included funding to expand CMCOP to an additional eight courts.

INTEGRATED COUNSELLING AND CASE MANAGEMENT

A 12-month family violence case management pilot commenced in May at Ballarat Magistrates' Court, expanding the existing Court Mandated Counselling Order Program. The Integrated Counselling and Case Management Pilot connects perpetrators who present with mental health, alcohol or other drug issues to support services and interventions to address their use of violence. The program offers advanced assessment, short-term case management and access to men's behaviour-change programs delivered by external service providers.

INTERPRETERS AT COURT

MCV engaged Monash University to design and deliver a targeted capability uplift program for interpreters working with family violence matters in the courts. The training serves to improve court user experience and accessibility for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by all the staff across our specialist courts and programs, and family violence. Your hard work and creativity has ensured that MCV has been able to continue serving the community in extraordinary times.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge outgoing Executive Director Elissa Scott (Specialist Courts and Programs) and Acting Executive Director Robert Cotter (Family Violence) who not only led through challenging times but also established strong foundations for future innovation and expansion. Thank you also to Suzan Gencay, who provided invaluable support as division lawyer.

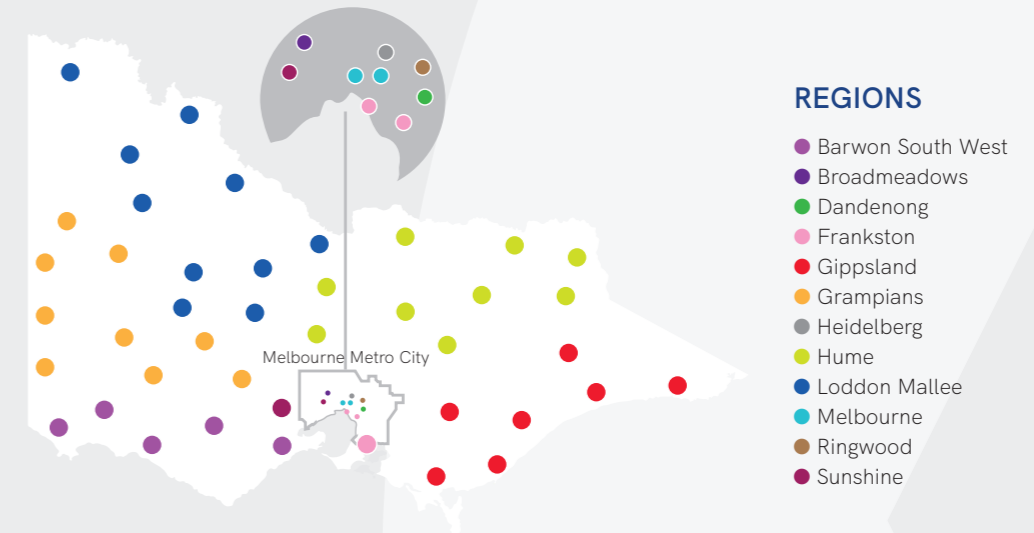
Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Supervising Magistrates Rose Falla (Koori Justice), Suzie Cameron (Drug Court), Ros Porter (ARC), David Fanning (NJC), Stella Stuthridge (Family Violence), Fiona Hayes (VOCAT) and all the other judiciary who, on top of their work in court, contribute their time, energy and knowledge to improving people's experience of the justice system.

MAGISTRATE PAULINE SPENCER

Head of the Specialist Courts Division



AROUND THE STATE



The court is divided into 12 administrative regions, each managed by a regional coordinating magistrate and a senior registrar. Each region consists of a headquarter court and many also include satellite courts. The judiciary and court staff work closely with a range of stakeholders to provide improved access to justice to all Victorians.

BARWON SOUTH WEST

The Barwon South West region includes courts at Geelong (headquarter court), Colac, Hamilton, Portland and Warrnambool.

Throughout the year, judicial officers and court staff across the region adapted to changes brought about by COVID-19.

Geelong has a new outdoor area that has been funded by the Koori Court. The pergola was built in the secure carpark, providing shelter for ERPs sitting in the court. It can also be used by all other court staff and judicial officers. The area also includes Indigenous artwork, which is

an added feature for all to appreciate and enjoy.

Warrnambool Court installed a spectacular, glass feature wall in the registry area. It was made by the Indigenous glass and arts group Wathaurong. The translucent wall depicts the flow of the Hopkins River from the old Framlingham Mission site to the ocean. It also shows wedge-tailed eagles riding the thermals above the river, and eels making their way up the falls, which was once a popular spot for fishing. The wall then shows how the water weaves its way to the river mouth and out into the ocean.

BROADMEADOWS

Works on the redevelopment of the CISP and Forensicare office recommenced after being held up due to COVID-19 restrictions. Despite lockdowns, the court continued to dispense justice and was one of five regions in the state to record an increase in the number of finalised criminal cases - up 2 per cent on last year.

AROUND THE STATE

Magistrate Rose Falla was farewelled as she moved to Melbourne in April to take up a new position as supervising magistrate for Koori justice.

DANDENONG

The Dandenong Magistrates' Court serves the cities of Greater Dandenong, Casey and the Cardinia Shire.

Court staff kept the court doors open with almost 10,000 hearings finalised via WebEx.

COVID-safe appearances were also conducted when possible. During lockdowns, court cases involving people in custody and family violence were given priority. Planning began for the establishment of a Specialist Family Violence Court at Dandenong.

Renovations were carried out on toilets for court users and staff.

FRANKSTON

COVID-19 impacted the region in similar ways to others with the use of technology, including WebEx, allowing operations to continue.

Works on the Specialist Family Violence Court safe waiting area, registry and additional courtroom were completed. The facilities were opened by Attorney-General Jill Hennessey in December.

A significant upgrade to the Children's Court facilities was also completed, adding a more secure entry, a bigger waiting area, a children's play space and additional offices.

GIPPSLAND

The Gippsland region comprises seven courts with the headquarter court situated at Morwell and other venues at Sale, Bairnsdale, Orbost, Omeo, Korumburra and Wonthaggi.

The region commenced a committal project, focused on case management and fast-tracking cases.

The region's trainee court registrars worked through the challenges presented by COVID-19. All were assessed as competent, with some becoming qualified and assigned deputy registrar powers.

At Morwell, courtrooms were renovated to increase chamber capacity and accommodate the return of jury trials. Secure docks were also installed in two courtrooms. Repairs were carried out on flood damage to one court, a jury room and an office was repaired.

Registrar Maria Colahan marked an amazing 45 years of service, while Cheryl Lawrence retired after 40 years of dedicated service as an administrative support officer.

GRAMPIANS

The Grampians region includes Ballarat (headquarter court), Bacchus Marsh, Ararat, Stawell, Horsham, Nhill, St Arnaud, Edenhope and Hopetoun courts.

The Integrated Counselling and Case Management pilot got underway at Ballarat in April. The program provides targeted intervention and support services for those with mental health, alcohol or drug issues. The pilot will run for a minimum of 12 months.

The first stage of works at Horsham was completed, with a new entry and upgraded security features including screening equipment and CCTV. New fencing was also installed along with construction of a dedicated entry for police to escort prisoners into the building.

Koori family violence practitioners commenced at the Ballarat Specialist Family Violence Court and a Koori community engagement officer started.

HEIDELBERG

The court maintained a strong focus on continuing to hear and resolve matters despite COVID-19 disruptions. Initiatives included adding an additional court to hear family violence intervention order applications, streamlining intervention order contests, and registry review of criminal contests.

Directions hearings for all contested matters were conducted, while the court experienced a significant increase in civil complaints from March, peaking at 177 cases in June.

Attorney-General Hennessey opened the new Specialist Family Violence Court facilities in December, via live stream. She was joined by Chief Magistrate Judge Hannan, Magistrate Meagan Keogh and Magistrate Stella Stuthridge.

The Koori Magistrates' Court was launched in April by Northern Metropolitan Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Chairperson Aunty Linda Bamblett.

Heidelberg contributed more than \$270,000 to local charities in the financial year through the Magistrates' Court of Victoria Court Fund. The charities provide assistance for vulnerable people, including food, crisis accommodation, Myki passes, petrol vouchers, clothing, school fees and Christmas hampers.

HUME

The Hume region encompasses Benalla, Seymour, Shepparton (headquarter court), Wangaratta, Wodonga, Cobram, Corryong, Mansfield and Myrtleford. Six magistrates work across the region.

Hume adapted well to the challenges of COVID-19, maintaining services without interruption. Regional Coordinating Magistrate Peter Mithen presented

interactive, online versions of the Cool Heads program for young drivers.

Planning for works at Benalla and Cobram got underway while work to expand Koori Courts to Wodonga and Wangaratta started, along with the expansion of the first regional Drug Court at Shepparton.

Magistrate David Faram represented the court as the Australian, Koori and Torres Strait Islander flags were raised for the first time on newly installed flagpoles at Shepparton Court. The ceremony was attended by local Koori elders along with court staff.

LODDON MALLEE

The Loddon Mallee region consists of 10 venues including Bendigo (headquarter court), Kyneton, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Echuca, Swan Hill, Kerang, Mildura, Robinvale and Ouyen.

Four magistrates are based at Bendigo and sit at seven locations. Magistrates visit Mildura, Robinvale and Ouyen on a roster. A judicial registrar sits weekly at Bendigo.

Planning for the relocation of the Echuca Court began, as well as for improvements at Kerang, Castlemaine and Robinvale.

Phone systems across courts in the Loddon Mallee region were upgraded and audio-visual equipment installed at Bendigo and Kerang.

A new bar table featuring Koori art was installed at the Swan Hill Court.

Volunteers' Week was special this year with Bendigo Court Network volunteer Margaret Roberts celebrating 40 years of service.

AROUND THE STATE

MELBOURNE

Melbourne Magistrates' Court began registrar pre-hearing conferences via WebEx, increasing resolution rates compared to telephone conferences, achieving comparable rates to in-person conferences.

As part of the family violence client experience project, renovations were completed to family violence waiting areas on the sixth floor. The level was painted, carpet laid and new furniture installed.

Umalek Balit recommenced for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who come to court for family violence proceedings. It offers support, information and referrals on family violence intervention orders, related criminal matters and VOCAT.

A subpoena SharePoint site was established between the court and Justice Health, allowing documents to be produced, stored and viewed electronically by magistrates and practitioners.

Peter Wenden achieved a remarkable work milestone, clocking up 50 years as a clerk of courts/registrar.

RINGWOOD

The Ringwood Court serves the Yarra Ranges Shire and the cities of Whitehorse, Maroondah, Manningham and Monash.

Ringwood continued to provide access to court proceedings despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Ringwood will also become a Specialist Family Violence Court with planning underway for building works including court entrances, interview rooms, in-court screens, remote witness facilities and child friendly spaces.

SUNSHINE

The Sunshine region includes the headquarter court at Sunshine and another court at Werribee. Eight magistrates sit across the region along with one judicial registrar.

The region was able to adapt through COVID-19, using WebEx. It significantly reduced outstanding custody and non-custody contests, custody pleas, civil and VOCAT hearings.

The Werribee Magistrates' Court underwent renovations, with cases moved to Sunshine Magistrates' Court. The works included renovations to toilets for court users, as well as upgrades to staff facilities. The works addressed safety and security issues and were done with no impact on court users or stakeholders.

Works at Sunshine also began, adding two new courtrooms and upgrading two others to custody courts.

The court was allocated funding for works to set up Specialist Family Violence Courts.

FINANCIALS AND STATISTICS

MAGISTRATES' COURT OF VICTORIA FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2020

FINANCIALS

Comprehensive operating statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2021			
	Notes	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Income from transactions			
Output appropriations		185,419	176,127
Special appropriations		59,972	61,075
Grants		3,279	4,374
Other income		0	0
Total income from transactions		248,670	241,564
Expenses from transactions			
Employee expenses and judicial officer remuneration		149,168	137,271
Depreciation and amortisation		25,811	26,925
Interest expense		762	808
Grants and other transfers		5,124	5,576
Capital asset charge (i)		13,208	15,808
Supplies and services		52,379	49,938
Total expenses from transactions		246,452	236,325
Net result from transactions (net operating balance)		2,219	5,239
Other economic flows included in net result			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of building		(26,487)	
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets		238	108
Net gain/(loss) on financial instruments		0	0
Other gains/(losses) from other economic flows		3,193	(666)
Total other economic flows included in net result		(23,055)	(558)
Net result from continuing operations		(20,836)	4,681
Other economic flows - other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to net result			
Changes in physical asset revaluation reserve(i)		(28,299)	11,021
Total other economic flows - other comprehensive income		(28,299)	11,021
Comprehensive result		(49,135)	15,702

(i) Non-financial assets, capital asset charge and changes in physical asset revaluation reserve have been allocated by jurisdiction.

CRIMINAL

Summary							
	Notes	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Cases initiated		166,499	160,473	143,151	145,625	134,835	-7%
Cases finalised		198,185	196,871	173,778	135,840	126,613	-7%
Bail application orders made		46,520	44,202	40,637	37,372	31,624	-15%
Applications finalised		62,260	68,906	62,273	50,905	40,388	-21%
Breach cases		11,142	10,583	10,219	8211	6882	-16%
Total criminal listings		726,249	713,062	660,262	606,061	607,167	0%
Caseload							
	Notes	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Cases initiated	1	166,499	160,473	143,151	145,625	134,835	-7%
Cases finalised	1	198,185	196,871	173,778	135,840	126,613	-7%
Cases finalised per court region	2						
Barwon South West		10,733	10,323	10,346	9074	8498	-6%
Broadmeadows		16,624	14,173	13,006	10,304	10,515	2%
Dandenong		16,648	15,354	14,210	11,786	8237	-30%
Frankston		21,437	19,802	17,463	14,630	12,464	-15%
Gippsland		10,188	12,799	10,987	8033	9161	14%
Grampians		7225	6719	6250	5527	5678	3%
Heidelberg		15,432	15,774	13,863	9895	8782	-11%
Hume		9239	9076	8914	6946	6662	-4%
Loddon-Mallee		10,924	9855	10,152	9028	9931	10%
Melbourne		41,845	45,377	31,985	23,944	22,854	-5%
Ringwood		17,192	17,027	16,115	11,889	12,134	2%
Sunshine		19,330	19,232	19,212	13,756	10,801	-21%
NJC		1368	1360	1275	1028	896	-13%
Total		198,185	196,871	173,778	135,840	126,613	-7%

Note 1: Cases initiated and finalised refer to criminal cases commenced or finalised in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria for the financial year specified. The totals do not include some enforcement hearings or applications, relisted warrants to arrest, or contravention of sentencing order cases.

Note 2: The above totals breakdown the criminal cases finalised by region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 12 regions. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts.

Initiations								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Charge and summons		101,807	107,822	100,303	103,891	94,973	89,505	-6%
Charge and information		39,767	42,502	41,417	35,182	45,662	41,850	-8%
Charge and warrant		4230	4477	4209	3841	4720	3188	-32%
Notice to appear		216	368	304	185	270	291	8%
Infringement revocation	1	14,922	11,330	14,240	52	0	0	
		160,942	166,499	160,473	143,151	145,625	134,835	-7%

Cases in the Magistrates' Court can be commenced by different processes. Cases coming before the court where the accused is either in custody or on bail will be subject to a charge and information or charge and warrant.

Note 1: The introduction of the *Fines Reform Act 2014* saw legislation relating to infringement revocations repealed. As such, infringement revocation matters are no longer referred to the Magistrates' Court and will be removed from future reports.

Bail orders								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Bail application orders made								
Bail granted		17,370	20,873	19,405	17,613	16,942	14,333	-15%
Bail refused		9803	11,744	11,609	11,487	10,100	8076	-20%
No application for bail		48,076	57,653	55,910	60,685	54,539	49,157	-10%
	1	75,249	90,270	86,924	89,785	81,581	71,566	-12%
Applications where bail was revoked		3037	4042	4055	3468	2970	3644	23%
Applications where bail was varied		8846	9861	9133	8069	7360	5571	-24%
Listings where bail was extended		98,217	108,782	100,609	87,348	89,291	98,825	11%
Other orders								
Application for bail - struck out/withdrawn		2448	2769	2794	2677	2682	1589	-41%
Application for bail variation - struck out/withdrawn		539	532	528	392	403	209	-48%
Application for revocation of bail - struck out/withdrawn		630	969	1283	2631	4179	6138	47%
Total bail applications struck out/withdrawn	2	3617	4270	4605	5700	7264	7936	9%

Note 1: For those applications, the accused in the case came before the court in custody.

Note 2: Struck out/withdrawn means the listed application did not proceed before the court.

The above table records the number of individual applications heard and determined by the court. These figures do not reflect the number of individual cases or persons who have bail granted or refused. All of the events listed below are counted in these figures:

- an accused person with multiple cases, and applications for bail on all of those cases
- bail revocation applications lodged on multiple cases for the one accused
- multiple applications heard on the one case (either applications for bail, to vary or revoke bail).

Applications								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Application types								
Licence restoration applications	4	8037	7586	8107	8000	4122	2765	-33%
Interlock removal applications	4	4981	5067	4780	4676	1563	0	-100%
Rehearing applications		2543	1898	1597	496	415	1243	200%
Application to vary or cancel sentencing order		1836	1964	1933	1356	716	737	3%
Application under section 84U Road Safety Act		831	1017	1305	1211	1055	619	-41%
Application to question/ investigate a person in custody		59	39	31	52	38	11	-71%
Application for forfeiture of property		465	439	393	321	257	213	-17%
Application for forensic procedure		5878	7043	6932	7239	2662	188	-93%
Applications for special mention		849	1113	1367	1324	1238	1150	-7%
Committal-related applications		1739	2052	1846	2234	2422	2278	-6%
Infringement-related applications		9910	6248	9817	4930	5096	5333	5%
Application for AVL order for accused	3		3077	7540	8641	9473	6872	-27%
Application for physical appearance of accused	3		3383	6184	6401	5170	202	-96%
All remaining applications		16,808	21,334	17,074	15,392	16,678	18,777	13%
Applications finalised		53,936	62,260	68,906	62,273	50,905	40,388	-21%

Note 1: There are many different types of applications that can be determined in the criminal jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria. Some applications are heard in conjunction with a case also before the court, whereas others can be listed independent of a pending case. This total is capturing applications where a formal application is filed with the Magistrates' Court. Common application types are highlighted above.

Note 2: In previous annual reports this section included applications for bail, applications for bail variation and applications for revocation of bail for both written applications and oral applications made in open court. These have been removed from this section and can now be found in the bail orders section.

Note 3: These applications were introduced on 1 December 2016 pursuant to s42L & s42M of the *Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1958* and relate to an accused in custody either physically appearing before the court or appearing via audio visual link.

Note 4: Since December 2019, the majority of licence eligibility order applications and interlock removal applications have been determined by VicRoads and not the Magistrates' Court. This has caused significant reduction in these applications.

Contravention of sentencing orders								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Number of cases listed for a breach of sentencing order	1	8264	10,662	10,441	10,185	8203	6881	-16%
Number of cases listed for restoration of suspended sentence	1, 2	1202	480	142	34	8	1	-88%
Total		9466	11,142	10,583	10,219	8211	6882	-16%

Note 1: Finalised cases with particular sentencing orders can be relisted at the Magistrates' Court under contravention proceedings if a charge is issued. This does not include contravention of intervention order or bail charges. These hearings are attached to the original case and are not counted as part of cases initiated. The above are the number of contravention cases that had their first listing in the specified financial year.

Note 2: Suspended sentences were abolished for offences committed on or after 1 September 2014; consequently cases listed for restoration of suspended sentences have decreased and will continue to do so.

Committals and appeals								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Committal proceedings finalised		2842	3182	3426	2355	2568	2589	1%
Appeals lodged against conviction and/or sentence	1	2988	2870	2853	4801	1906	1130	-41%

Note 1: Appeals lodged against conviction and/or sentence to the County Court.

Infringements								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Appeals against infringement registrar's refusal to revoke enforcement	1	70,508	40,388	52,132	380	0	0	
Infringement revocations granted and defaulted to Magistrates' Court	1	5221	4197	5656	49	0	0	
Infringement matters referred to the special circumstances list of the Magistrates' Court	1	49,537	56,336	57,095	210	0	0	
Total matters referred to the Magistrates' Court from the Infringements Court		125,266	100,921	114,883	639	0	0	
Infringement warrant case initiations	2	6746	6244	2287	36	0	0	
Individual infringement warrant initiations	2	306,343	327,057	163,383	436	0	0	

Note 1: These are the numbers of individual infringements that were initiated in the financial year under the Infringements Act referral system, not the Fines Reform Act where cases are commenced by way of charge and summons.

Note 2: Infringement/enforcement warrant case initiations counts the number of people who have been referred to the court by the Sheriff's office on unpaid warrants for fines. Individual infringement/enforcement warrant initiations refers to the number of individual warrants that have been listed for enforcement. These cases are not captured as part of the Budget Paper No. 3 reporting requirements.

No appearances by accused								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Warrants to arrest issued by the Magistrates' Court		62,316	66,531	61,181	48,561	33,996	32,347	-5%
Relisted warrants to arrest by the Magistrates' Court		58,371	64,603	60,694	49,768	41,362	20,111	-51%

If an accused fails to appear on the listed date, a magistrate may issue a warrant to arrest. If a warrant is executed, the person subject to the warrant will be bailed or remanded for further hearing to the Magistrates' Court. Relisted warrants are counted if the relist date is in the financial year specified.

Timeliness								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Criminal cases finalised within six months		84.3%	81.3%	80.6%	80.9%	82.1%	58.7%	-23%
Number of cases pending at 30 June 2014		44,254	51,554	49,516	52,840	83,260	101,787	22%
Of the pending cases, the amount of cases that have been pending for > 12 months		3853	4918	5187	4251	9299	28,802	210%

MCV aims to finalise 85 per cent of criminal cases within six months. MCV is required to report to the State Government on this target as part of Budget Paper No. 3 requirements.

Listings								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Hearing types	1							
Mention listings	2	350,068	360,869	340,826	320,092	299,974	328,783	10%
Plea of guilty hearings		62,461	74,132	77,353	77,443	64,702	56,655	-12%
Contest mention listings		16,900	18,673	18,704	17,713	16,355	12,533	-23%
Contested hearing listings		8657	8678	8419	7230	7218	6023	-17%
Committal mention listings		4813	5421	5220	4828	5248	6164	17%
Committal hearing listings		2399	2607	3560	3372	3039	4113	35%
Application listings	4	107,862	114,411	96,414	92,121	81,400	78,767	-3%
Breach sentencing order listings		29,086	40,870	43,538	45,221	40,722	36,615	-10%
Judicial monitoring listings		4412	5633	6821	8094	7685	6112	-20%
Court Integrated Services Program listings		3898	5180	5487	4676	3917	2534	-35%
Drug Court listings	3	3476	3666	7052	7358	7255	5867	-19%
Diversion listings		14,428	14,311	15,257	15,335	15,182	14,539	-4%
Infringement warrant listings		12,271	11,798	6868	344	62	38	-39%
All remaining listings	4	62,978	60,000	77,543	56,435	53,302	48,424	-9%
Total listings in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria	5,6	683,709	726,249	713,062	660,262	606,061	607,167	0%

Note 1: The above table highlights the common hearing types of the Magistrates' Court. A case can be determined by a plea of guilty at different stages of a court proceeding, not limited to the plea of guilty hearing type.

Note 2: 2015-16 mention listings have been revised up from 305,068 to 350,068.

Note 3: Drug Court at Melbourne became operational in March 2017 resulting in a large increase in listings.

Note 4: 2015-16 application listings have been revised up from 75,042 to 107,862.

Note 5: All remaining listings includes hearing types not specified above.

Note 6: Total listings include all cases and applications that have been before the court for a hearing in the specified financial year.

VOCAT

Caseload						
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Number applications lodged	6221	7312	7351	8067	8041	7075
Number orders made finalising claims	5910	7209	7655	7666	8492	7917
Number applications pending on 30 June	6757	7207	7292	8176	8169	7717
Case processing times						
Proportion of applications finalised within nine months of lodgement	47.60%	51.50%	51.40%	53.50%	54.80%	49.20%
Proportion of applications finalised within 12 months of lodgement	62.90%	65.70%	67.40%	68.90%	69.80%	64.30%
Age of pending caseload						
% of applications pending for > nine months	40.60%	36.10%	37.20%	38.90%	41%	43.90%
% of applications pending for > 12 months	31.30%	26.60%	27.10%	27.70%	30.80%	34.40%

CIVIL

Summary								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Total complaints issued		37,209	39,978	38,697	40,100	34,131	17,877	-48%
Total claims finalised		46,231	44,932	43,968	43,245	41,576	33,483	-19%
Total number of cases where a defence notice filed		7240	7845	7256	7237	8387	6803	-19%
Applications finalised		14,662	14,355	13,698	15,640	11,515	9631	-16%

Complaints								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Complaints issued or filed								
Up to \$10,000 claimed		26,757	28,383	25,785	25,485	20,238	8808	-56%
More than \$10,000 claimed		10,452	11,595	12,912	14,615	13,893	9069	-35%
Total complaints issued		37,209	39,978	38,697	40,100	34,131	17,877	-48%

Complaints can be filed in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria for a monetary value up to \$100,000.

Claims finalised								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Defended claims finalised at a hearing ¹								
Arbitration		2200	2563	2225	2177	1654	2164	31%
Hearing		2060	2300	2185	2440	2097	2218	6%
Pre-hearing conference or mediation		1080	1041	1003	911	1032	1378	34%
Any other hearing type		1828	1922	1779	1715	3276	1244	-62%
Total of defended claims finalised at a hearing		7168	7826	7192	7243	8059	7004	-13%
Default orders made	2	20,961	20,263	19,722	19,596	17,387	7592	-56%
Complaints dismissed (under Regulation 21.11 of <i>Magistrates' Court Civil Procedure Rules 2010</i>)	3	18,102	16,843	17,054	16,406	16,130	18,887	17%
Total claims finalised	4	46,231	44,932	43,968	43,245	41,576	33,483	-19%

Note 1: Cases where defences have been lodged and have been finalised, sorted by the hearing type where the matter was finalised.

Note 2: Plaintiff applies to the court for an order in default of a defence being filed by the defendant.

Note 3: Regulation 21.11 of the Magistrates' Court Civil Procedure Rules states that a complaint will be dismissed against any defendant three months after the expiration of the validity of service period of the complaint.

Note 4: Total claims finalised is the total of both the defended claims finalised at a hearing and default orders made.

Claims finalised (continued)								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Civil cases finalised per court region								
Barwon South West		703	895	964	797	567	290	-49%
Broadmeadows		620	1008	1199	1616	1340	565	-58%
Dandenong		1425	1699	1626	1598	1409	725	-49%
Frankston		1597	2003	2376	2264	1998	1146	-43%
Gippsland		478	674	741	635	476	137	-71%
Grampians		637	574	622	569	405	164	-60%
Heidelberg		395	708	1227	1104	1062	734	-31%
Hume		916	987	775	780	548	171	-69%
Loddon-Mallee		1418	1090	898	598	525	214	-59%
Melbourne		15,311	13,088	9888	10,853	10,030	7382	-26%
Ringwood		1176	1495	1839	2004	1820	1055	-42%
Sunshine		1625	1946	2269	2300	1969	767	-61%
Total		26,301	26,167	24,424	25,118	22,149	13,350	-40%

The above totals breakdown the civil cases finalised at either arbitration, hearing, pre-hearing conference or default order by region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 12 regions. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts.

Defence notices								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Defence notices filed								
Against complaints of up to \$10,000 claimed		2791	3124	2642	2572	3179	2310	-27%
Against complaints of more than \$10,000 claimed		2678	3237	3182	3328	4073	3644	-11%
WorkCover defences filed		1771	1484	1432	1337	1135	849	-25%
Total number of cases where a defence notice filed		7240	7845	7256	7237	8387	6803	-19%

A defendant to a claim can file a defence within specified timeframes depending on the complaint type. Defences can be filed outside specified timeframes as long as a default order has not been made. When a defence is filed with the Magistrates' Court, the case will be listed for either an arbitration, pre-hearing conference, or referred to the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria for mediation.

Timeliness								
	Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Defended claims finalised within six months		79.9%	82.6%	74.0%	79.3%	77.0%	49.6%	-27%
Defended claims pending as at 30 June		1767	1786	1890	1881	2209	2008	-9%
Of the pending cases, the amount of cases that have been pending for over 12 months		181	196	171	183	188	380	102%

The Magistrates' Court aims to finalise 80 per cent of civil cases within six months or less. The Magistrates' Court of Victoria is required to report to the State Government on this target as part of Budget Paper No. 3 requirements.

INTERVENTION ORDERS

Intervention orders summary - family violence and personal safety combined							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Total finalised cases with one or more interim orders	24,256	26,528	26,932	28,800	24,880	28,792	16%
Total original matters finalised	43,434	44,093	43,151	44,608	41,189	44,733	9%
Total applications finalised	6861	7471	7336	7616	7479	8283	11%
Total matters	74,551	78,092	77,419	81,024	73,548	81,808	11%
Total listings for finalised matters	122,909	131,301	139,741	139,999	131,455	165,968	26%

Caseload								
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21	
Family Violence intervention order applications								
Finalised cases with one or more interim orders	1	18,865	20,622	21,073	22,487	19,837	22,515	14%
Original matters finalised	2	33,763	33,748	32,790	33,914	32,094	33,828	5%
Application for extension	3	1686	1842	1876	1874	1686	1950	16%
Application for revocation	3	770	796	707	686	726	816	12%
Application for variation	3	3850	4333	4215	4501	4601	4929	7%
Total	58,934	61,341	60,661	63,462	58,944	64,038	9%	
Personal Safety intervention order applications								
Finalised cases with one or more interim orders	1	5391	5906	5859	6313	5043	6277	24%
Original matters finalised	2	9672	10,345	10,361	10,694	9095	10,905	20%
Application for extension	3	317	280	307	307	259	298	15%
Application for revocation	3	42	43	43	45	29	44	52%
Application for variation	3	195	177	188	203	178	246	38%
Total	15,617	16,751	16,758	17,562	14,604	17,770	22%	
Total family violence and personal safety matters	74,551	78,092	77,419	81,024	73,548	81,808	11%	

Note 1: Interim orders can be made before a final order is made on the case. The number expresses the amount of finalised cases that had an interim order made during the case. If more than one interim order was made on a case, only one is counted in this total.

Note 2: Original matters refer to finalising orders made on an application and summons, an application and warrant or a family violence safety notice. Finalising a matter does not necessarily mean an intervention order has been made.

Note 3: Applications refer to application for extension, variation and revocation. These applications can occur at any time of the hearing, and after a final order made. Any party to the proceeding is able to make an application.

Applications							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Application types							
Interlocutory applications	1216	1142	1118	1194	927	882	-5%
Applications for preliminary discovery	18	15	54	52	197	160	-19%
Applications for substituted service	3612	3982	3936	4193	4005	4632	16%
Applications for summary order	71	69	64	32	39	34	-13%
Applications to extend complaint	353	254	217	271	312	335	7%
Application for rehearing	3390	3353	3326	3436	2736	2062	-25%
Applications under s24 of <i>Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1989</i>	2	371	275	282	180	94	-48%
All remaining applications	329	143	149	137	97	88	-9%
Enforcement applications	1	5302	5122	4552	6070	3022	-56%
Applications finalised	14,662	14,355	13,698	15,640	11,515	9631	-16%

Note 1: There are numerous types of applications that can be determined in the civil jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria. Some applications are heard in conjunction with a case also before the court, whereas others can be listed independent of a pending case. The total applications above also capture the applications in the civil enforcement section below, except for warrants to seize property. Common application types are highlighted above.

Note 2: Applications under s24 of the *Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1989* are generally dealt with by a registrar. Persons who identify their property at a second-hand dealer or pawn shop, and have sufficient evidence to prove it is their property, can apply to the court to obtain an order to have their goods returned.

Civil enforcement								
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21	
Oral examinations finalised (including those under the <i>Judgement Debt Recovery Act 1984</i>)	1	3810	3659	3314	4606	2307	1040	-55%
Attachment of earnings hearings finalised	1	1180	1151	904	1207	753	158	-79%
Attachment of debt hearings finalised	1	53	71	109	84	47	45	-4%
Applications for instalment order finalised	2	259	241	191	173	146	96	-34%
Warrants to seize property issued	3	4007	3548	3643	3324	3289	1730	-47%
Total	9309	8670	8161	9394	6542	3069	-53%	

Note 1: The above are hearings where a debtor in a civil matter must attend. These hearings are conducted by a registrar of the court.

Note 2: A debtor or creditor can apply to the registrar for an instalment order. The applicant does not need to appear for a determination to be made.

Note 3: Warrants to seize property are requested by the creditor and filed with the Sheriff's Office of Victoria for execution.

Caseload (continued)							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Family violence and personal safety matters per region							
Barwon South West	6041	6430	6587	6360	5389	7410	38%
Broadmeadows	5785	6073	5860	5771	5339	5337	0%
Dandenong	6962	7086	7204	7665	6685	6526	-2%
Frankston	8353	8880	8019	8447	7910	8447	7%
Gippsland	7343	7128	6999	7579	6646	7511	13%
Grampians	3968	4070	3992	4043	3568	4561	28%
Heidelberg	4835	6029	6455	6567	5546	6502	17%
Hume	4098	4704	4636	5460	4949	5978	21%
Loddon-Mallee	5663	6027	6050	6780	6731	7963	18%
Melbourne	6352	6383	6497	6805	6500	6520	0%
Ringwood	6010	6405	6356	6294	5672	6104	8%
Sunshine	8262	7950	7923	8350	7614	8034	6%
NJC	879	927	841	903	999	905	-9%
Total	74,551	78,092	77,419	81,024	73,548	81,798	11%

The above totals breakdown the cases finalised by region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 12 regions. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts. If more than one interim order was made on a finalised case, only one interim order is counted in these totals.

Mode of issue							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
FV and PSIO applications commenced (by initiation type)							
Application and summons	28,093	28,636	27,628	27,754	24,733	28,329	15%
Application and warrant to arrest	7146	7459	7537	8244	7831	7593	-3%
Family violence safety notice	15,056	15,469	15,317	16,226	16,104	17,090	6%
Total	50,295	51,564	50,482	52,224	48,668	53,012	9%
Family violence applications commenced (by applicant)							
Victoria Police	27,951	28,931	28,212	30,226	30,147	31,923	6%
Private application	12,118	11,788	11,376	10,747	8957	9586	7%
Personal safety intervention orders commenced (by applicant)							
Victoria Police	2728	3171	3413	4063	3923	5186	32%
Private application	7498	7674	7486	7186	5638	6307	12%
Total Victoria Police applications	30,865	32,102	31,625	34,289	34,070	37,109	9%
Total private applications	19,610	19,462	18,862	17,933	14,595	15,893	9%

Note 1: The above shows a breakdown of how the family violence or personal safety intervention order case commenced. Applications and warrants and safety notices are commenced by Victoria Police.

Note 2: The above shows the breakdown between applications in which police were applicants and private applicants.

Listings							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Number of family violence listings	98,861	106,356	112,135	112,728	108,375	133,518	23%
Number of personal safety intervention order listings	24,048	24,945	27,606	27,271	23,080	32,450	41%
Total	122,909	131,301	139,741	139,999	131,455	165,968	26%

The above total represents the number of listings the finalised cases in the specified financial years had before completion. A case may come before the court on multiple occasions before it is finalised.

Family Law							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Total Family Law finalisations	1050	995	981	1107	1054	913	-13%

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria has limited powers under the *Family Law Act 1975*.

After-hours service							
Notes	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% diff 20-21
Intervention order applications received by after-hours service	10,681	10,465	9931	10,098	9382	9287	-1%

A significant proportion of the after-hours service of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria comprises family violence and personal safety intervention order matters.

SNAPSHOT

Cases finalised per court region							
	Criminal	% diff 20-21	Civil	% diff 20-21	IVOs	% diff 20-21	Total
Barwon South West	8498	-6%	290	-49%	7410	38%	16,198
Broadmeadows	10,515	2%	565	-58%	5337	0%	16,417
Dandenong	8237	-30%	725	-49%	6526	-2%	15,488
Frankston	12,464	-15%	1146	-43%	8447	7%	22,057
Gippsland	9161	14%	137	-71%	7511	13%	16,809
Grampians	5678	3%	164	-60%	4561	28%	10,403
Heidelberg	8782	-11%	734	-31%	6502	17%	16,018
Hume	6662	-4%	171	-69%	5978	21%	12,811
Loddon-Mallee	9931	10%	214	-59%	7963	18%	18,108
Melbourne	22,854	-5%	7382	-26%	6520	0%	36,756
Ringwood	12,134	2%	1055	-42%	6104	8%	19,293
Sunshine	10,801	-21%	767	-61%	8034	6%	19,602
NJC	896	-13%			905	-9%	1801
Total	126,613	-7%	13,350	-40%	81,798	11%	221,761

% diff 2020-21 - Percentage increase or decrease in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20. IVOs - Family violence and personal safety intervention orders, including interim orders made and applications.

COURT LOCATIONS

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100 Grenville Street South
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Benalla 3672
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Bendigo 3550
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& Dimboola Road
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Lyttleton Street
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Castlemaine 3450
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Cnr Punt Road &
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VOCAT

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1140 Nepean Highway
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ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	Assessment and Referral Court
CASO	Court advice and support officer
CISP	Court Integrated Services Program
CROP	CISP Remand Outreach Program
CSV	Court Services Victoria
DATO	Drug and alcohol treatment order
ERP	Elders and Respected Persons
FV	Family violence
FAS	Financial Assistance Scheme
ISP	Individual support plan
KLO	Koori liaison officer
MCV	Magistrates' Court of Victoria
NJC	Neighbourhood Justice Centre
NTV	No To Violence
OMC	Online Magistrates' Court
PBT	Preliminary breath test
PSIO	Personal safety intervention order
SFVC	Specialist Family Violence Court
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
VOCAT	Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal

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03 9628 7736
F: Civil pre-hearing
conference
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F: Civil registry
03 9628 7728
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