

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

28 October 2024

The Honourable Margaret Gardner AC,
Governor of Victoria

Government House
Melbourne Vic 3004

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Council of Magistrates, I present the
Magistrates' Court Annual Report for the year 1 July
2023 to 30 June 2024 pursuant to section 15(3) of the
Magistrates' Court Act 1989.

Yours sincerely



Justice Lisa Hannan
Chief Magistrate

Acknowledgement of Country

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria (MCV) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waterways.

MCV acknowledges and pays respect to Elders, knowledge holders and leaders – past present and emerging – and we extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Accessibility statement

At MCV, we want everyone to be able to understand what we do. We strive to be a court that is accessible to all Victorians. To access this document in a different version to allow you to engage with it more effectively, please refer to our website for instructions www.mcv.gov.au/accessibility-statement.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUSTICE LISA HANNAN

I am pleased to present the 2023–2024 Annual Report on behalf of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria. I am proud of the court's continued commitment to serving the Victorian community.

The past year has presented the court with fresh challenges and opportunities and our people have approached these with vigour and determination.

Following on from the launch of the MCV Strategic Plan in late 2022, the court has continued to work towards and build upon the foundations that underpin our organisation: *'Service, Community, Innovation – Delivering Court Excellence'*. The Plan continues to guide the court towards our commitment to be an innovative and accessible court delivering fair, transparent, and efficient justice.

Over the last reporting period, we have strengthened our approach to OneMCV and worked together to ensure that we have a shared vision. Judicial officers and staff work in partnership, there is one organisational culture where our people live our values, and we are one court with consistent processes across the state.

At MCV we are the people's court – this philosophy is at the core of everything we do and is central to our ability to deliver court excellence and a future-ready court, able to adapt to the dynamic and ever-changing environment in which we work.

We are 'one court' in every sense, and I want to acknowledge and thank each and every one of our people. It is the hard work, dedication and passion of all of our teams that ensures we continue to serve the Victorian community.

I extend particular appreciation to my judicial colleagues, including the Deputy Chief Magistrates, Heads of Division, Regional Coordinating Magistrates and Supervising Magistrates who have led with determination and vision. I thank our people including our executive leadership group, our senior registrars and all other managers and staff who collectively enable and support the work of our court. I also thank our many stakeholders who played essential roles in our success.

I would also like to thank CEO Simon Hollingsworth for his leadership, and all he has done for MCV, and for me in my role as Chief Magistrate over the last four years. This will be Simon's last Annual Report as CEO and I wish to acknowledge Simon's significant role in our success as we overcame many challenges and innovated our way to providing a modern justice response for the community we serve.

JUSTICE LISA HANNAN

CHIEF MAGISTRATE



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO SIMON HOLLINGSWORTH

Over the last 12 months, MCV has continued to build on the innovation and changes necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic with the move to online court hearings now embedded in our daily practice, along with so many other digital innovations that provide ever more accessible and efficient justice.

Throughout the 2023-24 financial year, court procedures in the newly launched Knowledge Management System were accessed 94,500 times; helping the court deliver on its strategic vision by driving one-way, same-way best practice servicing. While we have 51 court locations, we are one court with a single and determined commitment to deliver excellence at every court, every day.

Our specialist court programs continue to expand. In February the Warrnambool Koori Court celebrated two decades of delivering

culturally safe justice to the local First Nations community. Along with Supervising Magistrate Koori Justice Rose Falla, I was honoured to mark this important milestone, bringing together Elders and Respected Persons and court agency representatives.

In February the new Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) facilities at Dandenong Magistrates' Court officially opened. Specialist family violence facilities will be established at Sunshine, Latrobe Valley, Melbourne, Ringwood, Geelong and Broadmeadows courts, and when complete, will finalise the court's SFVC capital works investment and significantly improve our justice response.

In May, the 2024/25 Victorian State Budget included funding of \$37.3 million over four years for Shepparton and Ballarat drug courts. The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP), both at MCV and County Court was allocated \$15.6 million over four years, until 2028, ensuring MCV can continue its commitment to therapeutic justice.

A further \$3.4 million was also allocated to the IPAA Award winning MCV Service Centre. This funding will allow the Service Centre to continue responding to an estimated 600,000+ public enquiries and supporting our registries. This important decision ensures our crucial service centre can continue supporting our courts and meeting critical service demand.

In conclusion, this will be my final message as CEO of MCV. It has been a privilege to help lead the Court at this critical time over the past four years. I extend my gratitude to the Chief Magistrate, the Honourable Justice Hannan, for her leadership and personal support, along with the executive leadership group, the specialist courts, the judiciary and to each and every member of staff. I am confident the Court will continue to innovate and thrive into the future.

SIMON HOLLINGSWORTH

Chief Executive Officer

ABOUT THE MAGISTRATES' COURT OF VICTORIA

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria (MCV) provides an essential service to the Victorian community as the first level of the Victorian justice system. More than 93 per cent of Victoria's criminal and civil cases begin and end in the Magistrates' Court.

We provide a range of services to ensure the delivery of fair, transparent and efficient justice to all Victorians, no matter how they access the court, including:

- hearing and determining matters at courts across metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria and offering remote hearing options where it is appropriate and consistent with the interests of justice;
- providing specialist courts and tailored support to facilitate access to justice; and
- offering alternative ways to resolve matters before a final hearing including pre-hearing conferences and mediation.

MCV has three divisions: criminal, civil and specialist 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 Court or Supreme Court.

The Civil Division hears disputes arising from debts, claims for damages and other monetary or property disputes up to \$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*.

Many people come before the court with underlying mental health or substance abuse issues, social or cultural disadvantage, or disability. Our specialist courts and programs are solution-focused, using the opportunity of an individual's participation in the justice system to prevent reoffending, improve wellbeing and increase community safety.

These specialist courts and programs 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 or cognitive impairment.

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 social needs to help reduce the likelihood of reoffending. CISP works with clients during the bail (or pre-trial) stage of their criminal proceedings.

CISP REMAND OUTREACH PROGRAM

The CISP Remand Outreach Program (CROP) is a joint initiative with Corrections Victoria. CROP staff work in prisons to identify remand prisoners who would 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

The Drug Court provides offenders with a drug 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 treatment program is judicially supervised and provides a therapeutic response to address the underlying causes of addiction.

KOORI COURT

Koori Court is a culturally appropriate sentencing court for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who plead guilty. The Koori Court facilitates conversations between the participant (accused), their family and their lawyer sitting around a table, directly engaging with Koori Elders, the magistrate, Victoria Police, Corrections Victoria 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.



Advanced Case Managers Larissa Newall and Sarah Sunderland with ARC certificate

NEIGHBOURHOOD JUSTICE CENTRE

Established in 2007, 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.

SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE COURTS

Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVCs) deliver an integrated family violence response with magistrates, registry and family violence practitioners all trained and specialising in family violence. Features of the SFVCs are designed to improve the safety and well-being of people affected by family violence. These 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.

The new Financial Assistance Scheme is due to commence in the next financial year, after which time, VOCAT will no longer receive applications.

The Tribunal continues to work with the Victorian Government in preparation for the commencement of the Financial Assistance Scheme, with finalisation of pending applications and transitional arrangements being an area of significant importance for the Tribunal.



Figure 1: Map of MCV court locations

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

As at 30 June 2024

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria is led by the Chief Magistrate, Justice Lisa Hannan. Her Honour is supported by Deputy Chief Magistrates, Heads of Division, Supervising Magistrates and Regional Coordinating Magistrates. The magistrates are supported by an administrative team, which is led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to deliver an innovative and responsive court.

THE JUDICIARY

CHIEF MAGISTRATE

Justice Lisa Hannan

DEPUTY CHIEF MAGISTRATES

Susan Wakeling
Tim Bourke

HEADS OF DIVISION

Crime	Donna Bakos
Civil	Phillip Goldberg
Specialist Courts	Pauline Spencer

SUPERVISING MAGISTRATES

ARC	Ros Porter
Drug Court	Suzie Cameron
Family Violence/PSIO	Thérèse McCarthy
Family Violence Crime	Tim Gattuso
Industrial	Kathryn Fawcett
Koori Justice	Rose Falla
Sexual Offences	Stephen Ballek
VOCAT	Fiona Hayes
WorkCover	Meghan Hoare

REGIONAL COORDINATING MAGISTRATES

Barwon South West	Ann McGarvie
Broadmeadows	Stella Stuthridge
Dandenong	Fran Medina
Frankston	Charles Tan
Gippsland	Tim Walsh
Grampians	Michelle Mykytowycz
Heidelberg	Tim Hoare
Hume	Simon Zebrowski
Loddon Mallee	Megan Aumair
Moorabbin	Luisa Bazzani
Melbourne	Tara Hartnett
NJC	Noreen Toohey
Ringwood	Hayley Bate
Sunshine	Michael McNamara

MAGISTRATES

Marita Altman
 Julian Ayres
 Guillaume Bailin
 Julia Barling
 John Bentley
 Amina Bhai
 Jacqueline Billings (CHC)
 Angela Bolger
 Jade Bott
 Caroline Boulton
 Jennifer Bowles (CHC)
 Felicity Broughton
 Gerard Bryant
 Abigail Burchill
 Tony Burns
 Carolyn Burnside
 Darrin Cain (CHC)
 Vincenzo Caltabiano
 Victoria Campbell
 Megan Casey
 Michael Coghlan
 Ann Collins
 Gregory Connellan
 Erica Contini (CHC)
 Suzette Dootjes
 Peter Dotchin (CHC)
 Alanna Duffy
 Peter Dunn
 Bernard FitzGerald
 Lesley Fleming (CHC)
 Leon Fluxman
 Justin Foster
 Majella Foster-Jones (CHC)
 Belinda Franjic
 Jane Gibson (CHC)
 Kieran Gilligan
 Julie Grainger
 Timothy Greenway
 Kirstie Grigor
 Jennifer Grubissa
 Michael Gurvich
 Simon Guthrie
 Andrew Halse
 Robyn Hamilton (CHC)
 Annabel Hawkins (CHC)
 James Henderson
 Natalie Heynes
 Michelle Hodgson
 Cecily Hollingworth
 Franz Holzer
 Carolyn Howe
 Gail Hubble (CHC)
 Trieu Huynh
 Audrey Jamieson (CCOV)
 Graeme Keil
 Russell Kelly
 Meagan Keogh
 Costas Kilias

Michael King
 Nunzio La Rosa
 Heather Lambrick
 Elizabeth Langdon (CHC)
 David Langton
 Rohan Lawrence
 Stephen Lee
 Dominic Lennon
 Gerard Lethbridge
 Denise Livingstone
 Cynthia Lynch
 Mary-Anne MacCallum
 Jan Maclean
 Kay MacPherson (CHC)
 Urfa Masood
 Ross Maxted
 Sharon McRae
 Peter Mellas
 Johanna Metcalf
 Helen Murphy
 Michelle Mykytowycz
 John O'Callaghan
 Julie O'Donnell
 Jason Ong
 Kim Parkinson (CHC)
 Shiva Pillai (CHC)
 Samantha Poulter
 Vicky Prapas
 Jillian Prior
 Hugh Radford
 Lucy Raponi (CHC)
 Michael Richards
 Kay Robertson
 Gregory Robinson
 Mark Sabljak
 Tim Schocker
 Adrian Serratore
 Andrew Sim
 Sharon Smith (CHC)
 Brett Sonnet
 Patrick Southey
 Paresa Spanos (CCOV)
 Helen Spowart
 David Starvaggi
 Robert Stary
 Melissa Stead (CHC)
 Fiona Stewart
 Mark Stratmann
 Jacinta Studham
 Mia Stylianou
 Kimberley Swadesir
 Greg Thomas
 Malcolm Thomas
 Cynthia Toose
 Letizia Torres
 Jennifer Tregent
 Olivia Trumble
 Allison Vaughan
 Belinda Wallington
 Nahrain Warda

Mike Wardell
 Andrew Waters
 Ian Watkins
 Matthew White
 Siobhan Whittle (CHC)
 Michael Wighton
 Louise Wildberger
 Jarrod Williams
 Christina Windisch
 Simon Zebrowski
 Francis Zemljak (CHC)

RESERVE MAGISTRATES

Ross Betts
 Barry Braun
 Andrew Capell
 John Doherty
 Michelle Ehrlich
 David Faram
 Anne Goldsbrough
 Margaret Harding
 John Hardy
 Jonathan Klestadt
 Cathy Lamble
 John Lesser
 Lance Martin
 Andrew McKenna
 Gregory McNamara
 Peter Mithen
 Daniel Muling
 Jelena Popovic
 Steven Raleigh
 Peter Reardon
 Duncan Reynolds
 Charlie Rozenecwajg
 Ronald Saines
 Marc Sargent
 Michael Smith
 Brian Wright

JUDICIAL REGISTRARS

Julian Bartlett
 Michael Bolte
 Shannon Dellamarta
 Samantha Dixon
 Kristie Eales
 Gavin Green
 Anthony Gwynne
 Leah Hickey
 Barry Johnstone
 Sivaratnam Kandasamy
 Stephanie Keogh-Barnes
 Alison Paton
 Lisa Rees
 Katherine Rynne
 John Wieladek
 Sally Wilson

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

EXECUTIVE TEAM

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Simon Hollingsworth

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP GROUP

Executive Director People and Innovation

Melissa Martino

Executive Director Court Operations

Simone Shields

Executive Director Family Violence

Melinda Stuart-Adams

Executive Director Specialist Courts and Programs

Jane Craig

Executive Director Strategy and Corporate Services

Jake Hawley

Director Legal Policy Unit

Kate Clark

Director Finance and Business Services

George Triantos

Director Koori Strategy and Engagement

Mason Atkinson

Principal Registrar

Tanya Turner

Director Innovation and Service Experience

Richard Hodge

Director Family Violence Practice and Operations

Leanne Sinclair



Laure Harstedt and Marcus Angelino at Shepparton Court



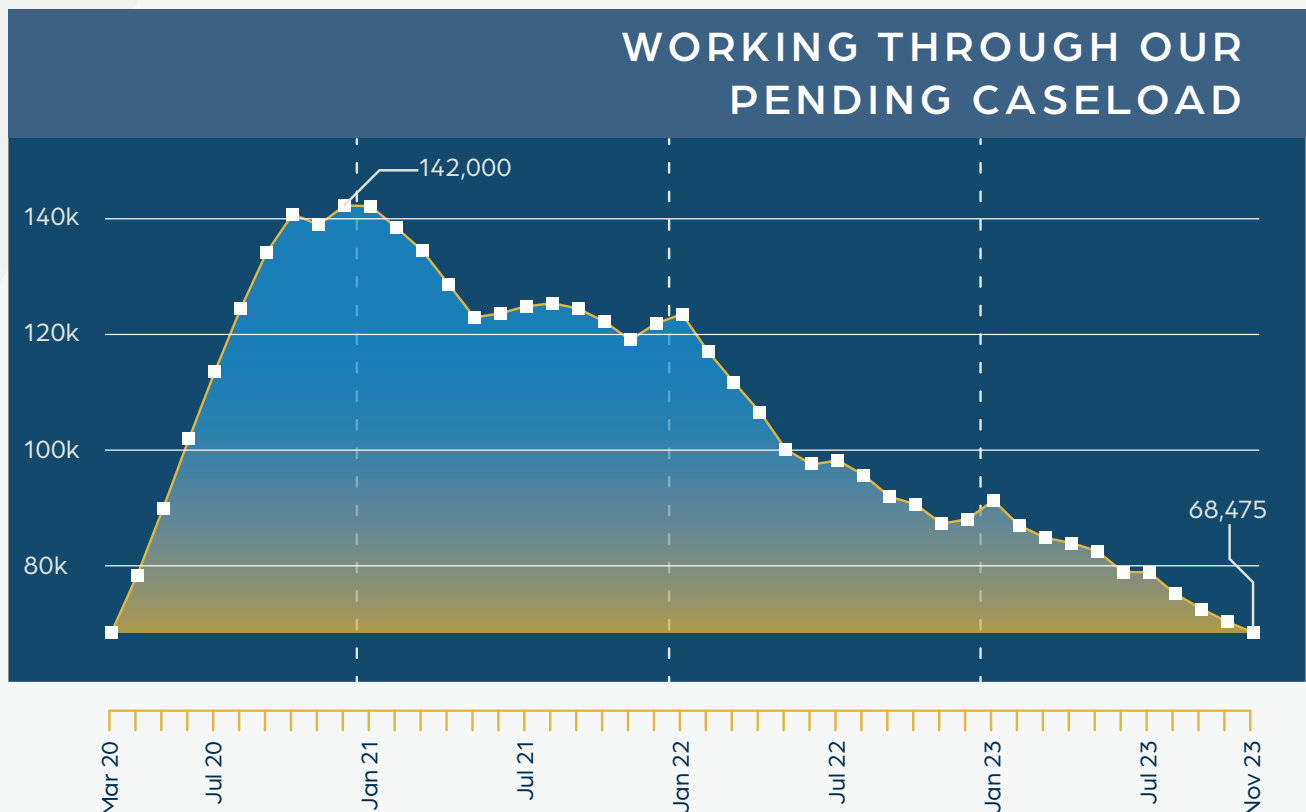
Bianca Van Grieken and Taylor Bono at Melbourne Magistrates Court

In November 2023, MCV achieved a significant milestone reducing pending cases to **68,475** – lower than the pending caseload in March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began.

These numbers were a result of the hard work of MCV teams and stakeholders and were supported by the Court's commitment to innovations such as the Online Magistrates' Court, Audio-visual link (AVL) Scheduler, Service Centre, Family Violence Coordination Tool, Knowledge Management System, Navigation and Triage and new online forms.

MCV is technologically capable of delivering our service in new ways, providing an accessible and innovative court where almost any matter can be heard online. The Service Centre provides centralised support for court users and facilitates enhanced in-person service at our court locations.

Hybrid online and in-person hearings are now a mainstay in MCV's modern court, helping to deliver fair, transparent and efficient justice.



2023-24 AT A GLANCE



135,282
criminal cases initiated



New Koori Court In
Echuca



Assessment and Referral
Court expansion to
three new sites



147,917
criminal cases finalised



38,086
family violence intervention
order matters finalised



11,705
personal safety intervention
order matters finalised



33,871
civil claims finalised



304
active drug and alcohol
treatment orders



31
Drug Court graduates



1921
individuals supported by
remote hearings

TOWARDS EXCELLENCE: ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS



MCV SERVES

A COURT OF EXCELLENCE

MCV is the people's court

We are committed to being a court of excellence and ensuring our services are informed by the experience and insights of our people and court users.

MCV is a modern court with a long and proud history of providing justice for Victorians, supported by our adoption of the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE) as part of our framework for court excellence.

IFCE provides the values, concepts and tools to ensure that courts serve the public effectively and drives continuous improvement for excellent service delivery and equitable justice outcomes for our community.

In this reporting period, we have continued our journey to excellence by addressing areas for improvement and implementing new ways of working and have made considerable progress toward our strategic goals, including:

- the continued success of the operating of the MCV Service Centre, providing a centralised support service for court users across the state and responding to enquiries;
- the embedding of our Knowledge Management System (KMS), which has transformed court operations by providing a single source of truth for operational information; and
- the delivery of professional development and specialised training to continue to empower our people to realise their potential.

Our Service Commitment

MCV is committed to delivering a consistent and responsive court user-centric service model. The MCV Service Commitment marks another important milestone on our court excellence journey.

The Service Commitment was released in April 2024 and is our public commitment to deliver a consistent and high standard of service across our courts. Our service commitment sets out:

- **Our commitment to court users** including what we will do and what our community can expect from us.
- **How court users can help** MCV deliver consistently excellent service to them.
- **An invitation to our community to provide feedback** and share their experiences with MCV, including in-person or online using our new feedback platform.

The Service Commitment was developed in consultation with a broad cross-section of staff and judiciary, as well as our Koori Strategy and Engagement team, the Court Services Victoria (CSV) Pride Network and CSV diversity, equity and inclusion specialists.

Embedding self-determination in our systems, policies and work practices

CSV's Self-Determination Action Plan 2021-2025 demonstrates the collective commitment of Victorian courts to First Nations Victorians and sets out the expectation to create a Koori inclusive environment for staff, Koori agencies and the Koori Communities in Victoria.

After the release of the Action Plan, MCV's Koori Strategy and Engagement (KS&E) team was formed in June 2022, and immediately prioritised the implementation of a self-determination governance structure as a critical step in our self-determination journey.

Another focus for KS&E is organisational engagement and consultation designed to embed self-determination principles within MCV. With a dedicated team to drive this work forward and an enormous level of support from all levels of the organisation, we have already witnessed a cultural shift and a more proactive focus on embedding self-determination principles in all that we do.

"Over the last few years, we have made really significant and positive progress towards self-determination at the Court. I am proud of how far we have come. We have a strong foundation and a commitment to embed meaningful cultural change." – Mason Atkinson, Director Koori Strategy and Engagement.



Krysta Whittingslow, Koori Court Officer

New Koori Court in Echuca

The opening of the 17th Koori Court in March 2024 marked a significant milestone for MCV and the Echuca community.

Those who spoke at the Koori Court opening event reflected on how providing a culturally sensitive and collaborative court where the participant, magistrate, Elders and Respected Persons, and Koori Court officers gather around the bar table promotes healing and reconciliation through therapeutic and restorative justice practices.

Supervising Magistrate for Koori Justice and Wotjobaluk and Wemba Wemba woman, Magistrate Rose Falla, said Koori Court participants felt a great level of involvement, connection and comfort during the court proceedings.

Under the model, a Magistrate and Elders and Respected persons sit around an oval Koori Court table with the participant, support persons, their lawyer, the prosecution and a Koori Court officer. All participants take part in a sentencing conversation, with Elders and Respected persons providing cultural advice. The model aims to reduce the likelihood of reoffending, strengthen accountability, and aims to address the underlying issues contributing to criminal behaviour.

The new Koori Court was funded by the Aboriginal Justice Agreement Phase Four and represents our continued commitment to ensuring First Nations Victorians have a better experience of the criminal justice system, reducing their risk of reoffending and improving outcomes for participants and the broader community.

Assessment and Referral Court expansion

We have delivered specialised support to more court users living with complex mental health issues or disabilities with the expansion of the Assessment and Referral Court (ARC) to Ballarat and Heidelberg in April and June 2024 respectively.

ARC was first launched at MCV in 2010 and currently provides services at the Melbourne, Frankston, Moorabbin, Latrobe Valley, Bendigo, Ballarat and Heidelberg Magistrates' Courts. In October 2024, Dandenong will become the next headquarter site for ARC as part of the expansion project across Victoria, which is expected to be complete by mid-2026.

The ARC expansion project was a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System and aims to reduce reoffending by assisting participants to engage with treatment and support services to address the underlying factors contributing to their behaviour.

As we celebrated the expansion of ARC, we also marked the one-year anniversary of ARC at Bendigo Magistrates' Court with their first participant graduation.



Anniversary of ARC at Bendigo Magistrates' Court

MCV EMPOWERS

A WORKPLACE WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES

Developing MCV's new Health, Wellbeing and Safety plan

In late 2023, we evaluated our first Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022-2024. Informed by this assessment, and guided by considered input from our people, we have now developed and implemented our new Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2024-2026 (HWS Plan).

We understand the complexities of our work environment, which can be both rewarding and challenging. Our new HWS Plan identified key actions for 2024-2026 spanning health promotion and awareness, intervention and support, protection and prevention, and effective systems of work.

This second unified plan represents our commitment to promoting a culture of care that empowers our people to thrive and prioritises the health and safety of our people – both physical and emotional.

Our commitment to building our leaders

Launched in 2023, our Leadership Commitment was designed to foster a culture of leadership excellence and growth among new and emerging leaders across all levels of MCV.

Values and behaviours outlined in the Leadership Commitment set a framework for leaders to follow to help teams achieve common goals, outline what is expected of our leaders, and provide clear, consistent and actionable behaviours and values that can help them, and their teams, achieve their best.

Engaging community across Koori Family Violence Courts

In collaboration with Yarn Strong Sista, possum and kangaroo pelt burning workshops were delivered in Ballarat, Melbourne, Heidelberg and Shepparton to First Nations people working in the family violence sector, providing a chance to come together from across the sector to yarn, learn and engage in a culturally healing practice.



Pauline Smith at the Koori Court possum and kangaroo pelt workshops

Throughout NAIDOC Week 2023, staff and judiciary were invited to join online and in-person events across the state to celebrate the culture, history and achievements of First Nations people in Australia. At Melbourne Magistrates' Court, MCV celebrated the start of NAIDOC Week with a livestreamed Yidaki (didgeridoo) performance by Wangaratta and Wodonga Koori Court Elder and Respected Person Darren Atkinson.

Staff and judiciary were also invited to take part in National Reconciliation Week 2024, with an address from Yorta Yorta man Ian Hamm, a member of the Stolen Generation and a strong advocate for Stolen Generations issues. Each year, NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week events serve as a reminder that each of us contributes significantly to the journey of reconciliation; uniting our teams and encouraging discussions about what reconciliation signifies to us.

The Koori Family Violence Unit (KFVU) engaged Little Rocket to film our Deadly Discussion series, that engages community working in the family violence sector at each location where Umalek Balit (UB) operates. UB is a culturally safe and relevant program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who come to specific Magistrates' Court locations for family violence related proceedings. The video is available to CSV staff to strengthen cultural competency providing a candid insight into the strengths, cultural connection and diversity of First Nations Peoples.



CMS information session

MCV INNOVATES

A FUTURE-READY COURT

Working towards the next phase of our Case Management System

As we have continued to progress MCV's digital transformation journey and strengthen our commitment to establishing more efficient and sustainable court operations, we have entered the next phase of our Case Management System (CMS) rollout; the criminal division.

Launched for our civil jurisdiction in October 2022, the CMS has had a positive impact on overall efficiency, staff and practitioner satisfaction, as well as the environmental benefits of reduced paper processes.

The CMS Child Protection jurisdiction went live in October 2023 and marked further progress towards MCV's commitment to our digital transformation journey.

The delivery of CMS across our criminal division will have a significant impact on modernising the way we operate. Important work is already underway to prepare for this phase, including developing in-depth training and support in preparation for deployment in 2025.

MCV virtual assistant tools

MCV has continued to introduce innovations into its services with the embedding of a Chatbot Virtual Assistant capability within its existing public webchat enquiry response service, accessible via the MCV website.

The Chatbot Virtual Assistant provides standard responses to common high-volume and low-risk enquiries, giving court users quick and easy access to need-to-know information,

reducing the need for human intervention where appropriate and creating capacity for Service Centre team members to handle more complex enquiries.

Chatbot uses human-led artificial intelligence (AI) to address common court user enquiries in a completely controlled environment, drawn from the Court's internal Knowledge Management System. Use of the Chatbot is voluntary and users have the option to transfer to a Service Centre court officer at any time. Not only is the public utilising our webchat service, but the justice system is benefiting through established working protocols with Corrections Victoria, Victoria Police and Victoria Legal Aid, through our webchat service.

eDiary to ease administrative tasks

Registries now have access to more streamlined capabilities when booking hearings thanks to the staff-developed eDiary.

Developed by court staff for court staff, the eDiary has allowed courts to strategically list lengthy matters to be heard. Other enhancements include a broader search functionality, wide range of data export options and consistent terminology.

The eDiary has been implemented across all MCV courts statewide.

MCV CONNECTS

A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

Court User Survey

In February 2024, MCV conducted its first state-wide court user survey, seeking to obtain insights from public court users about their experiences engaging with the court, our services and facilities to identify areas of strength and actionable improvements to build upon our commitment as a people-centred court.

Designed in accordance with the International Framework for Court Excellence, data was collected anonymously, with the survey open to all public court users. In total 1762 survey responses were captured, resulting in MCV conducting the largest court user survey by any single court jurisdiction in Australia.

Preliminary analysis indicated four out of five court users were satisfied with the staff, services and facilities at court and felt judicial officers and court staff were polite and treated them with respect.

Improvements suggested by court users will be invaluable in guiding the ways in which we can continue to enhance the court user experience and strive to encourage a culture of excellence within MCV.

Lived Experience Register

The Lived Experience Register comprises a diverse range of organisations with affiliated lived experience consultants who can provide insights into the design and improvement of MCV initiatives.

The Register was introduced to create a simple and easy process for staff leading design or improvement initiatives to engage with lived experience consultants, leading to inclusive and user-centred services that enhance the court user experience.

Lived experience consultants are available in areas such as:

- criminal justice system
- disability
- First Nations people
- culturally and racially marginalised
- family violence and women with complex needs
- general disadvantage and barriers to access
- LGBTQIA+
- mental health
- alcohol and other drugs
- victims of crime
- youth

By engaging the services of lived experience consultants in the design phase, we can ensure MCV services are accessible for all Victorians.

Georgia McCormick and Samantha Lauder



Wyndham Law Courts

Work continued on the state-of-the-art Wyndham Law Courts development. When it is officially opened, it will be the largest court complex outside of Melbourne's CBD bringing together multiple jurisdictions and services, catering to the specific needs of the region under the one roof.

Importantly, the development has been designed with court users in mind, with a focus on strengthening community connections through collaboration and improving the court user's experience with a person-centric approach.

Safety and security upgrades at Specialist Family Violence Courts

Through a program of capital works we have delivered more welcoming and fit-for-purpose facilities across our Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVCs). Recent renovations to the Melbourne Magistrates' Court and Dandenong Magistrates' Court have provided a more secure, welcoming and functional environment for our staff and people affected by family violence.

With a new safe waiting area, interview rooms and dedicated counters for affected family members (AFMs) and respondents, the new facilities at Dandenong have enabled a more trauma-informed court experience for people affected by family violence.

Stage one works at Melbourne Magistrates' Court are complete, with a new safe waiting area, remote witness rooms, respondent area, registry counters and staff facilities. More significant changes are also underway for the front of the building, including a separate entrance for AFMs, a secure lift and a larger safe waiting area with a kitchenette for AFMs.

Capital works are also progressing to deliver improved SFVC facilities at Broadmeadows, Geelong, Latrobe Valley, Ringwood and Sunshine.



Safe waiting area at Dandenong Magistrates' Court

"The new separate entrance has enabled us to safely support affected family members at court and facilitate their use of the separate waiting area and interview rooms containing dual access to support safety at court. The ability to separate affected family members from respondents has reduced the stress on affected family members as well as court staff."

– Daniel Latter, Acting SFVC Manager, Dandenong Magistrates' Court

CIVIL DIVISION

Head of Division – Magistrate Phillip Goldberg

MCV's civil division is overseen by the Head of the Division, Magistrate Phillip Goldberg, and comprises the following portfolios:

- WorkCover led by Supervising Magistrate Meghan Hoare
- Industrial led by Supervising Magistrate Kathryn Fawcett

Federal jurisdiction

The federal jurisdiction has continued to hear matters since the Supreme Court of Victoria Court of Appeal ruling in October 2022, which confirmed that the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) lacks the jurisdiction to adjudicate on matters involving Commonwealth law.

Industrial jurisdiction

On 1 July 2023, amendments to the *Fair Work Act 2009* commenced, which provided for small claims procedures to apply to claims valued at up to \$100,000 and allow the Court to award the cost of filing fees for successful small claimants.

Improving outcomes through stakeholder engagement

In 2023-2024, the civil division regularly engaged with stakeholders on a range of jurisdictional matters and used these engagement opportunities to support improved court operations and open dialogue with court users.

The Civil Law Committee, chaired by Magistrate Goldberg, has ensured that the practical challenges faced by practitioners were addressed and that the judiciary's expectations continue to be clearly communicated to the profession.

The Civil Practice Committee has provided a forum for members of the profession including counsel and solicitors, Office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and the Court. The committee meetings have provided a platform for members to consider process optimisation and resolve procedural uncertainties and has served as a forum to communicate upcoming changes that impact the profession.

The WorkCover Users Group represents the profession and stakeholders including WorkSafe Victoria. Throughout this reporting period, the group has discussed relevant procedural updates within the division and across court venues, providing a forum to discuss developments and address issues within the work area. The division has actively participated as Chair at the WorkCover User Group Committee meetings, which are held quarterly. These meetings bring together the judicial members of the profession to explore strategies to streamline the jurisdiction's operations and keep members abreast of updates.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee includes members of the judiciary and court administration, the Victorian Bar, the Law Institute of Victoria, and the Department of Government Services. During 2023-2024, the ADR Committee continued its focus on rule reform proposals and project work.

We acknowledge everyone who has contributed to our work in the civil jurisdiction. The Judicial Registrars have focused their efforts on serving the civil and federal jurisdictions. Their invaluable contributions have significantly aided in the timely resolution of matters as well as the leadership of Supervising Magistrate Meghan Hoare (WorkCover) and Supervising Magistrate Kathryn Fawcett (Industrial).

CRIMINAL DIVISION

Head of Division – Magistrate Donna Bakos

MCV's criminal division comprises generalist crime, overseen by the Head of Division, Magistrate Donna Bakos, and the following two portfolios:

- Sexual Offences led by Supervising Magistrate Jo Metcalf (to January 2024) and Stephen Ballek; and
- Family Violence Crime led by Supervising Magistrate Timothy Gattuso.

Generalist crime

The 2023–24 reporting period marked an important passage of law reform for the criminal jurisdiction. During this time, the division has maintained its working relationships with key stakeholders to ensure that the Court's views are vocalised and reflected in the Victorian Government's legislative reform agenda.

Major items of law reform in generalist crime included implementation of the *Bail Amendment Act 2023*. MCV engaged regularly with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) and major stakeholders throughout the development of these significant amendments.

MCV prepared to implement the reforms to the *Bail Act 1977* with professional development internally including consultation with the Judicial College in relation to the major reforms to bail provisions relating to First Nations people. MCV also assisted the profession in November 2023 through the Court's partnership with the Law Institute of Victoria's continuing professional development (CPD) series with Magistrate Bakos presenting to over 270 attendees on the key aspects of bail reform.

Other major bodies of law reform work in the criminal jurisdiction include the introduction of the Nazi salute ban with the passage of the *Summary Offences Amendment (Nazi Salute Prohibition) Act 2023* and the *Crimes Amendment (non-fatal Strangulation) Act 2023*.

The division has continued its longstanding practice of contributing to references undertaken by the Sentencing Advisory Council. On this year's agenda, the division has assisted the Council's study of combined orders of imprisonment and community correction orders, the Criminal Justice Diversion Program, Sentencing Occupational Health and Safety offences and participation in a rebuilding exercise of the virtual 'You be the Judge' interactive software hosted by the Sentencing Advisory Council. The Court's involvement on these references is recognition of its integral role in the criminal justice system.



Moorabbin Law Courts

Improving outcomes through stakeholder engagement

As Head of the division, Magistrate Bakos has maintained her position as Chair of several criminal law committees to ensure that the practical challenges facing practitioners are accounted for, and that the judiciary's expectations are made clear. Her Honour has continued to meet with representatives of the profession through the monthly Criminal Court Users Committee, which comprises of officers from key prosecutorial and defence agencies. Further, Her Honour collaborated regularly with the Specialist Courts and Programs Division to deliver a holistic criminal jurisdiction through regular meetings with Forensicare, Youth Justice, Disability Services and Corrections Victoria.

Throughout 2023-24, the Sexual Offences Management Committee, chaired by the Supervising Magistrate, brought together representatives from all MCV headquarter courts to discuss legal and practical issues arising in sexual offence proceedings. The Committee regularly updated the Sexual Offences Case Management Guide to ensure members of the judiciary had a contemporary reference when conducting sexual offence proceedings.

The Sexual Offences Division met regularly with the Victorian Police Specialist Sex Offences Prosecution Unit to discuss listing issues, with a view to minimising delay and improving information provided to the Court in child abuse material cases.

Supervising Magistrate Ballek also continued to represent MCV on the Intermediary Program and the Child Witness Service Steering Committees. This relationship has proven to be increasingly important considering the reforms introduced by the *Justice Legislation (Sexual Offences and Other Matters) Act 2022*.

The Family Violence Division has been represented by Supervising Magistrate Gattuso at the monthly Family Violence Committee meetings, attended by prosecutorial and defence agencies relevant to this jurisdiction.



Magistrate Bakos with Court Officer Program participant, Cameron Puzon

His Honour also represented the division at the Family Violence Practice and Policy Committee, attended bi-monthly by all lead family violence magistrates to discuss legal and practice issues relating to this increasingly complex area of law.

The criminal division's representation at these meetings has been important to ensure the effective intersection between family violence practice and the criminal jurisdiction. The portfolio will continue to monitor relevant case law emerging in the family violence jurisprudence.

Each of these portfolios has worked to ensure that the practice and procedure in the criminal division reflects the highest standards of criminal justice and that MCV has maintained a contemporary and effective criminal jurisdiction. We acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed to our work in the criminal jurisdiction.

SPECIALIST COURTS DIVISION

Head of Division – Magistrate Pauline Spencer

MCV's Specialist Courts and Programs division is overseen by Magistrate Pauline Spencer and comprises the following portfolios:

- Assessment and Referral Court, led by Supervising Magistrate Ros Porter
- Drug Court, led by Supervising Magistrate Suzie Cameron
- Family Violence/Personal Safety Intervention Orders, led by Supervising Magistrate Therese McCarthy
- Koori Justice, led by Supervising Magistrate Rose Falla
- VOCAT, led by Supervising Magistrate Fiona Hayes
- Neighbourhood Justice Centre, led by Regional Coordinating Magistrate Noreen Toohey

Aligned to MCV's strategic direction towards a person-centred court of excellence with strong connections to the communities we serve, therapeutic justice approaches have been applied across Victoria in both mainstream court lists and in a range of Specialist Courts and Programs. Therapeutic justice approaches work to address both the legal matter, as well as other underlying factors which are contributing to contact with the Court.

Having been in operation for over 20 years, mainstream court list support programs and Specialist Courts have gradually been implemented, evaluated and expanded to have broad reach across the state.

There is a body of evidence demonstrating the benefits that mainstream court list support programs and Specialist Courts deliver to participants and the community. Successful court-based interventions can reduce and avoid cost associated with remand, imprisonment and future offending.

Therapeutic justice approaches at MCV have leveraged the opportunity of an individual's

engagement with the court to identify and assess needs; connect people with community supports and use their court engagement and the oversight of a judicial officer as a positive force for behaviour change.

Over the past year, the Navigation and Triage pilot program expanded from Melbourne to Sunshine and Bendigo, with new team members and extended roles, providing essential brief intervention support to 950 referred individuals. The program facilitated 1116 referrals to external services and made an additional 1480 inquiries to assist participants further.

These court responses form a continuum of interventions – from low intensity to high intensity – which focus on delivering the right response to the right person at the right time. The overall aim is for participants to engage in a positive way with the community without the need for court supports.

We were pleased to share our work at the 2024 Justice Reintegration Puzzle conference in Sydney this year. This was a fantastic opportunity to share how therapeutic justice approaches can shift the focus to harm-avoidance and the wellbeing of the individual.

Court Integrated Services Program

The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) continues to support people on bail. CISP case managers assess the participant's needs and develop plans to address them, manage risk, connect participants with community services and encourage and monitor engagement with community support.

CISP case managers adopt a multi-disciplinary approach with the judiciary, who supervise CISP participants with monthly court reviews to encourage positive behaviour change.

In this reporting period, 4535 people were referred to CISP for support and 2334 participants were accepted.

CASE STUDY: Court Integrated Services Program

Mark* came before the Court after being remanded in custody for family violence related charges. The Court heard that Mark lived with an acquired brain injury, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. In his own words Mark described how his past trauma had led to "big trust issues" and his life was all about "sitting at home and drinking to become numb" so that he "did not have to feel the pain." He accepted responsibility for the people he had hurt along the way and reflected how his life had been "on a downhill spiral" and he was heading "for the gutter or jail".

Mark was granted bail with a condition to engage with the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP), a three to four-month court-based program that provides case management, linkages with community supports and monthly reviews before the same magistrate in the mainstream or traditional court list.

During his CISP journey Mark was linked with his doctor and a psychiatrist, he completed alcohol and drug counselling and completed one-on-one counselling for family violence with a Men's Behaviour Change Program. He attended regular sessions with his CISP case manager to support his motivation to make change, to

develop his problem-solving skills and build confidence to leave the house and seek out pro-social friends and activities.

In reflecting on his experience Mark talked about how CISP had changed his life for the better in so many ways. "Without [the CISP case manager's] push in the right direction I'm not sure I could have done it on my own," he said. Mark highlighted that his monthly court reviews with the magistrate assisted his recovery, saying "you don't focus on the bad that someone does unless you need to give them a clear message like you did with me at the start... I love the way when you read my reports that you always made sure that you let me know that I was doing a great job and to keep up the good work....for me to hear that kind of positive reinforcement gave me even more drive to continue to push myself even harder in working on myself and to keep heading in the right direction."

Mark successfully completed the program and demonstrated sufficient rehabilitation to prevent the imposition of a custodial sentence. Mark is no longer offending and is now engaging in community volunteering activities.

*The participant's name has been changed for confidentiality.



EchUCA Koori Court opening

Koori Court

In 2023–24, we saw an increase in the number of participants attending Koori Court and the number of matters finalised, with 368 participants attending and 1252 matters finalised.

During 2023–24, the Koori Court expanded to EchUCA, giving more Koori and First Nations people access to culturally appropriate supports and programs when they attend court for criminal matters. The Koori Court now operates at 17 MCV locations.

Assessment and Referral Court

The expansion of our Assessment and Referral Court (ARC) to all headquarter courts continued in 2023–24, with Bendigo commencing operation in July 2023, Ballarat in February 2024, and Heidelberg in May 2024. This expansion program was funded in the 2022–23 state budget as part of the Government's response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system, which recommended ARC be available at all headquarter courts. In this reporting period, 398 people were referred to ARC with 171 participants accepted.

DRUG COURT DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT ORDER (DATO)

2023/24	Dandenong	Melbourne	Ballarat	Shepparton	Total
DATO imposed	36	57	23	13	129
DATO active participants	88	133	46	37	304
DATO graduations	11	9	7	4	31
DATO completions	4	10	2	4	20
DATO cancellations	12	28	27	14	81
DATOs not suitable or refused	28	31	8	16	83

Drug Court

The Drug Court utilises an incentive and sanction framework, by which participants are held to account for their own outcomes. The framework includes mandatory participation in drug testing, addiction counselling, and regular, consistent judicial monitoring by the same judicial officer. This further aims to increase accountability and drive successful outcomes with positive reinforcements.

Pilots continued to the regional locations of Ballarat and Shepparton during 2023-24 demonstrating considerable value to these regional communities.

Neighbourhood Justice Centre

With the support of on-site services, the Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC) continues to focus on addressing the causes of offending, with alcohol and other drugs and family violence services in especially high demand.

The NJC continued to play an active role in contributing to crime prevention activities across Yarra, working with Victoria Legal Aid, Fitzroy Legal Service, Victoria Police, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and the City of Yarra on many projects.



Rebecca Hicks running a community outreach session at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre



Team at VOCAT

Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal

Over the past two reporting periods the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT, the Tribunal) has successfully undertaken four major interlinking transition projects:

- The VOCAT Archiving and File Management Project
- The Tribunal's Principal Registry relocation
- Centralisation of the Tribunal's operations as part of its backlog reduction strategy
- The expansion of the Tribunal's workforce to meet increased demand and reduce pending applications ahead of the transition to the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS)

Further detail about the Tribunal's important work is outlined in its 2023–24 Annual Report.

Koori justice initiatives

In addition to the ongoing contribution of the Koori Court, a range of Koori Justice initiatives are underway.

A pilot of two dedicated Koori Support Practitioners (KSPs) at Melbourne Magistrates' Court commenced in 2023–24. Nearly a quarter of referrals to Navigation and Triage are for

First Nations persons making the support of the KSPs invaluable.

The KSPs have played an integral part in providing a timely and culturally appropriate response for First Nations people remanded into the Melbourne Custody Centre. They undertake welfare checks for First Nations participants and can provide immediate brief-intervention responses when required.

The KSPs have also collaborated and provided insights to assist registry staff in best practice culturally appropriate responses to First Nations participants and court users.

For the 192 First Nations clients the KSPs worked with this financial year, they made 145 referrals for support and engaged with a further 268 services for these clients.

Koori Liaison Officers – regional Drug Courts

As part of the regional Drug Court pilots at Ballarat and Shepparton, three dedicated positions were created to provide for a more culturally safe program response to First Nations participants.

The Koori Liaison and Support Officers are key staff members of the regional multidisciplinary teams. They have provided support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and their families and engaged

with the community to support the promotion and awareness of the Drug Court.

The Koori Practice Manager role has contributed to the growth and consistency of the Drug Court Program by leading and implementing initiatives designed to achieve better practice outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants.

This approach was informed by wide consultation with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies and community, which was reflective of MCV's commitment to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and strengthening cultural awareness and safety within the organisation.

Family Violence

The Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) division now operates at 13 Magistrates' Court locations across Victoria. In 2023-24, approximately 78 per cent of family violence intervention order matters were heard at an SFVC location.

In this financial year, we have continued to embed our specialist response to family violence to ensure people affected by violence feel safe at court and that our people, systems and processes are delivering a response which is trauma informed and focused on the experience of the court user.

Our Remote Hearing Support Service (RHSS) continued to support up to 2000 families annually across 11 court locations, providing trauma-informed support to AFMs choosing to appear online.

We continued to deliver the capital works program to include safe waiting areas for respondents at Dandenong, Latrobe Valley, Sunshine, Ringwood, Geelong, Broadmeadows and Melbourne

A new, more innovative Court Mandated Counselling Orders Program

After monitoring the efficacy and sustainability of the Court Mandated Counselling Orders Program (CMCOP) for some time, MCV made the decision in May 2024 to redirect CMCOP to a more inclusive and sustainable model that can deliver at the scale required to best

support behaviour change where it is most needed.

MCV launched a new court grants program in July 2024 to deliver a targeted, innovative response to family violence.

CMCOP has been a key part of the Court's specialist response to family violence, providing eligible respondents with support to change behaviour. The new program will aim to increase a broader range of respondents who complete CMCOP and will expand the availability of programs to better meet the needs of respondents from diverse backgrounds. This approach will make a meaningful difference and improve the safety and wellbeing of people affected by family violence across the community.

Multi-disciplinary engagement days

The Family Violence Division hosted further Multi-Disciplinary Engagement (MDE) events for the first five SFVCs – Ballarat, Frankston, Heidelberg, Moorabbin and Shepparton. This was an important opportunity to re-engage with local stakeholders, discuss trends, challenges and opportunities, renew collective commitment to the SFVC model, and further build collaborative practice.

The events brought together magistrates and court staff with representatives from Victoria Police, legal practitioners and local family violence organisations to consider how integrated practice helps prevent and respond to family violence. Participants worked together to map the court user journey through a case study and identify ways in which a Specialist Family Violence response can be provided as agencies work together, engage in panel discussions, and network with local services.

OPERATIONAL DATA AND FINANCIALS

CIVIL DIVISION

SUMMARY

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Total complaints issued		34,131	17,877	21,921	33,377	37,518	12%
Total claims finalised		36,821	34,084	21,197	24,327	33,871	39%
Total number of cases where defence notice filed		8387	6803	6765	7712	8458	10%
Total civil listings		-	-	-	31,726	27,918	-12%

As of October 2022, Civil Division data is generated from the court's new case management system. Data prior to October 2022 was extracted from the previous Case Management System. Further refinements in reporting methodologies may result in updates to data previously published. Data in relation to listings has become available as a result of the new CMS.

COMPLAINTS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Complaints issued or filed							
Up to \$10,000 claimed		20,238	8808	10,753	17,327	15,391	-11%
More than \$10,000 claimed		13,893	9069	11,168	16,050	22,127	38%
Total complaints issued		34,131	17,877	21,921	33,377	37,518	12%

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

CLAIMS FINALISED

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Defended claims finalised at a hearing	1						
Arbitration		1191	2125	1314	1090	1048	-4%
Hearing		1620	2452	2674	2595	2801	8%
Pre-hearing conference or mediation		889	1262	807	806	738	-8%
Any other hearing type		1677	2387	2386	2275	4008	76%
Total of defended claims finalised at a hearing		5377	8226	7181	6766	8595	27%
Default orders made	2	15,371	7098	6269	7938	8947	13%
Complaints dismissed (under Regulation 21.11 of Magistrates' Court Civil Procedure Rules 2010)	3 4	16,073	18,760	7747	9623	16,329	70%
Total claims finalised		36,821	34,084	21,197	24,327	33,871	39%

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 2020 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.

CIVIL CASES FINALISED PER COURT REGION

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Barwon South West		1227	870	595	832	1188	43%
Broadmeadows		2334	1945	1471	1669	2678	60%
Dandenong		2402	2090	1383	1817	3651	101%
Frankston		3358	3012	1928	1047	1659	58%
Gippsland		773	548	280	584	780	34%
Grampians		629	438	282	535	648	21%
Heidelberg		1757	1742	1404	1395	2033	46%
Hume		842	654	391	664	868	31%
Loddon-Mallee		1060	748	419	683	950	39%
Melbourne		15,836	16,340	9944	8789	9769	11%
Moorabbin		-	-	-	1584	2229	41%
Ringwood		3269	2860	1486	2706	4000	48%
Sunshine		3334	2837	1614	2022	3418	69%
Total		36,821	34,084	21,197	24,327	33,871	39%

The above totals break down the civil cases finalised at either defended hearing stage, default order or the complaint was dismissed, broken down by region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 13 regions, with Moorabbin separating from Frankston and becoming its own region in 2022. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts.

DEFENCE NOTICES

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Defence notices filed							
Against complaints of up to \$10,000 claimed		3179	2310	1926	1965	1882	-4%
Against complaints of more than \$10,000 claimed		4073	3644	4171	5099	5871	15%
WorkCover defences filed		1135	849	668	648	705	9%
Total number of cases where a defence notice was filed		8387	6803	6765	7712	8458	10%

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.

TIMELINESS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Defended claims finalised within six months		77.0%	49.6%	66.1%	70.0%	72%	3%
Defended claims pending as at 30 June		2209	2008	1806	3171	3063	-3%
Of the pending cases, the number of cases that have been pending for more than 12 months		188	380	296	183	213	16%

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.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

SUMMARY

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Cases initiated		144,455	133,487	122,470	145,054	135,282	-7%
Cases finalised		115,575	105,784	132,543	160,959	147,917	-8%
Bail application orders made		37,372	31,624	34,045	42,643	37,692	-12%
Applications finalised		50,905	40,388	43,461	43,303	42,096	-3%
Contravention of sentencing order cases		8211	6882	4980	5767	6318	10%
Total criminal listings		606,061	607,167	703,571	715,710	660,315	-8%

CASELOAD

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Barwon South West		7555	6720	9094	12,015	10,408	-13%
Broadmeadows		8697	8495	10,092	11,287	10,367	-8%
Dandenong		9679	7719	8877	13,280	11,450	-14%
Frankston		11,746	10,000	15,324	12,012	9901	-18%
Gippsland		6624	7749	8273	9293	8376	-10%
Grampians		4545	4673	5567	6850	6115	-11%
Heidelberg		8257	6594	9638	12,334	10,276	-17%
Hume		5711	5299	7535	7982	7983	0%
Loddon-Mallee		7314	8447	8360	8712	8356	-4%
Melbourne		23,836	21,927	26,500	31,281	29,375	-6%
Moorabbin		-	-	-	5729	5481	-4%
NJC		858	748	1000	1215	1230	1%
Ringwood		10,261	9636	10,058	11,826	13,515	14%
Sunshine		10,492	7777	12,440	17,143	15,084	-12%
Total	2	115,575	105,784	132,758	160,959	147,917	-8%

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, applications, relisted warrants to arrest, or contravention of sentencing order cases.

Note 2: The above totals break down the criminal cases finalised by Region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 13 regions, with Moorabbin separating from Frankston and becoming its own region in 2022. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts.

INITIATIONS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Charge and summons		94,136	88,622	88,549	94,779	87,426	-8%
Charge and information		45,425	41,438	42,651	45,988	43,808	-5%
Charge and warrant		4,630	3,142	3,216	3,516	3,284	-7%
Notice to appear		264	284	532	771	764	-1%
Infringement revocation		0	1	0	0	0	-
Total		144,455	133,487	134,948	145,054	135,282	-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.

BAIL ORDERS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Bail application orders made							
Bail granted		16,942	14,333	16,889	20,987	17,760	-15%
Bail refused		10,100	8,076	7,429	9,107	8,471	-7%
No application for bail		54,539	49,157	51,387	59,152	53,047	-10%
Total	1	81,581	71,566	75,705	89,246	79,278	-11%
Applications where bail was revoked		2,970	3,644	3,427	3,992	3,568	-11%
Applications where bail was varied		7,360	5,571	6,300	8,557	7,893	-8%
Listings where bail was extended		89,291	98,825	123,479	120,232	110,918	-8%

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

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).

TIMELINESS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Criminal cases finalised within six months		70%	76%	41%	55%	67%	22%
Number of cases pending as at 30 June		83,260	101,787	83,194	64,553	52,720	-18%
Of the pending cases, the number of cases that have been pending for over 12 months		9,299	28,802	25,226	11,732	7,011	-40%

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.

INTERVENTION ORDERS

INTERVENTION ORDERS SUMMARY - FAMILY VIOLENCE

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Total initiations		41,207	42,402	41,857	41,465	42,286	2%
Total finalisations		33,058	35,598	43,040	39,347	38,086	-3%
Total post hearing applications lodged		3985	3569	3971	4205	4067	-3%
Total interim orders made		33,570	38,119	39,003	40,897	43,263	6%
Total overall listings		111,558	132,713	145,865	144,757	146,315	1%

CASELOAD - FAMILY VIOLENCE

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Barwon South West		2460	3090	3326	3036	3175	5%
Broadmeadows		2875	2589	3219	3178	2811	-12%
Dandenong		3099	2948	3942	3682	3345	-9%
Frankston		3424	3620	5175	2739	2867	5%
Gippsland		2791	3168	3237	3063	3131	2%
Grampians		1658	1886	1961	1914	1984	4%
Heidelberg		2435	2745	2800	2842	2717	-4%
Hume		2169	2529	2450	2360	2528	7%
Loddon-Mallee		2842	3126	3209	3070	3094	1%
Melbourne		2716	2724	3725	3489	3165	-9%
Moorabbin		-	-	-	1341	1289	-4%
NJC		348	350	376	279	264	-5%
Ringwood		2504	2704	4173	3310	3065	-7%
Sunshine		3737	4119	5447	5044	4651	-8%
Total		33,058	35,598	43,040	39,347	38,086	-3%

The above totals break down the cases finalised by Region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 13 regions, with Moorabbin separating from Frankston and becoming its own region in 2022. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts. Cases may be counted more than once if a post hearing application has been lodged and finalised.

INTERVENTION ORDERS SUMMARY - PERSONAL SAFETY

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Total initiations		11,484	12,579	12,145	12,591	12,908	3%
Total finalisations		9138	11,027	12,620	11,765	11,705	-1%
Total post hearing applications lodged		276	231	268	338	208	-38%
Total interim orders made		9004	10,530	10,053	11,112	11,569	4%
Total		28,868	36,531	38,685	37,613	38,501	2%

INTERVENTION ORDERS SUMMARY – PERSONAL SAFETY (CONT)

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Barwon South West		693	1115	1033	889	1004	13%
Broadmeadows		634	761	965	919	726	-21%
Dandenong		770	759	945	762	693	-9%
Frankston		848	953	1231	824	741	-10%
Gippsland		808	1032	965	932	1152	24%
Grampians		460	697	667	680	694	2%
Heidelberg		657	799	853	902	863	-4%
Hume		674	947	870	825	941	14%
Loddon-Mallee		989	1335	1131	1153	1098	-5%
Melbourne		875	848	1359	1312	1256	-4%
Moorabbin		-	-	-	421	455	8%
NJC		242	217	291	233	169	-27%
Ringwood		658	726	1174	812	967	19%
Sunshine		830	838	1136	1101	946	-14%
Total		9138	11,027	12,620	11,765	11,705	-1%

The above totals break down the cases finalised by Region. Across the state, court locations are divided into 13 regions, with Moorabbin separating from Frankston and becoming its own region in 2022. Each region consists of a headquarter court and some regions are made up of satellite courts. Cases may be counted more than once if a post hearing application has been lodged and finalised.

PENDING

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Family violence intervention orders pending		-	-	-	8559	10,265	20%
Personal safety intervention orders pending		-	-	-	2650	2883	9%
Total		-	-	-	11,209	13,148	17%

The Magistrates' Court identified a Courtlink counting rule which resulted in a minor overstatement of the pending case count for family violence and personal safety intervention order cases. Following amendment, the pending case count has been revised downward and the court is working to provide revisions for prior dates.

LISTINGS

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Family violence listings		111,558	132,713	145,865	144,757	146,315	1%
Personal safety intervention order listings		28,868	36,531	38,685	37,613	38,501	2%
Total		140,426	169,244	184,550	182,370	184,816	1%

The above total represents the overall number of listings in the specified financial years. A case may come before the court on multiple occasions.

FAMILY LAW

	Notes	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	%Diff
Total family law finalisations		1054	913	700	870	828	-5%

MCV CONTROLLED INCOME AND EXPENSES: FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

Notes	23/24 \$'000
Income from transactions	
Output appropriations	193,109
Special appropriations	84,776
Grants	1,944
Total income from transactions	\$279,829
Expenses from transactions	
Employee expenses and Judicial Officer remuneration	208,432
Depreciation and amortisation	0
Interest expense	1279
Grants and other transfers	3,125
Supplies and services	68,199
Total expenses from transactions	\$281,034
Net result from transactions (net operating balance)	-1,205
Other economic flows included in net result	
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of building	0
Net gain/(loss) on non-financial assets	0
Net gain/(loss) on financial instruments	0
Other gains/(losses) from other economic flows	333
Total other economic flows included in net result	333
Net result from continuing operations	-872
Other economic flows — other comprehensive income	-
Items that will not be reclassified to net result	-
Changes in physical asset revaluation reserve	0
Total other economic flows — other comprehensive income	0
Comprehensive result	-872

MCV CONTROLLED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES: FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

Notes	23/24
Financial assets	23,990
Non-financial assets	413
Total assets	24,403
Liabilities	133,729
Total liabilities	133,729
Net assets	-109,326

COURT LOCATIONS

ARARAT

63-75 Barkly Street
PO Box 86
Ararat 3377

BACCHUS MARSH

Main Street
PO Box 277
Bacchus Marsh 3340

BAIRNSDALE

Nicholson Street
PO Box 367
Bairnsdale 3875

BALLARAT

100 Grenville Street South
PO Box 604
Ballarat 3350

BENALLA

17 Bridge Street West
PO Box 258
Benalla 3672

BENDIGO

188 Hargreaves Street
PO Box 930
Bendigo 3550

BROADMEADOWS

Cnr Pearcedale Parade
& Dimboola Road
PO Box 3235
Broadmeadows 3047

CASTLEMAINE

Lyttleton Street
PO Box 92
Castlemaine 3450

COBRAM

Cnr Punt Road & High
Street
Cobram 3644
C/- PO Box 607
Shepparton 3630

COLAC

Queen Street
PO Box 200
Colac 3250

CORRYONG

11 Jardine Street
PO Box 50
Corryong 3707

DANDENONG

35 Pultney Street
PO Box 392
Dandenong 3175

DROMANA

Codrington Street
PO Box 105
Dromana 3936

ECHUCA

Heygarth Street
PO Box 76
Echuca 3564

EDENHOPE

49 Elizabeth Street
Edenhope 3318
C/- PO Box 111
Horsham 3400

FRANKSTON

Fletcher Road
PO Box 316
Frankston 3199

GEE LONG

Railway Terrace
PO Box 428
Geelong 3220

HAMILTON

Martin Street
PO Box 422
Hamilton 3300

HEIDELBERG

Jika Street
PO Box 105
Heidelberg 3084

HOPETOUN

75 Lascelles Street
Hopetoun 3396
PO Box 111
Horsham 3400

HORSHAM

22 Roberts Avenue
PO Box 111
Horsham 3400

KERANG

Victoria Street
PO Box 77
Kerang 3579

KORUMBURRA

Bridge Street
PO Box 211
Korumburra 3950

KYNETON

Hutton Street
PO Box 20
Kyneton 3444

LATROBE VALLEY

134 Commercial Road
PO Box 687
Morwell 3840

MANSFIELD

88 High Street
PO Box 105
Mansfield 3722

MARYBOROUGH

Clarendon Street
PO Box 45
Maryborough 3465

MELBOURNE

233 William Street
GPO Box 882
Melbourne 3001

MILDURA

56 Deakin Avenue
PO Box 5014
Mildura 3500

MOORABBIN

1140 Nepean Highway
Highett 3190
PO Box 2042
Moorabbin 3189

MYRTLEFORD

Myrtle Street
Myrtleford 3737
PO box 633

**NEIGHBOURHOOD
JUSTICE CENTRE**

241 Wellington Street
PO Box 1142
Collingwood 3066

NHILL

110 Macpherson Street
Nhill 3418
PO Box 111
Horsham 3400

OMEO

Main Street
Omeo 3898
PO Box 367
Bairnsdale 3875

ORBOST

8 Wolsley Street
Orbost 3888
PO Box 367
Bairnsdale 3875

OUYEN

Oke Street
Ouyen 3490
PO Box 5014
Mildura 3500

PORTLAND

67 Cliff Street
PO Box 374
Portland 3305

RINGWOOD

39 Ringwood Street
PO Box 333
Ringwood 3134

ROBINVALE

George Street
Robinvale 3549
PO Box 5014
Mildura 3500

SALE

79-87 Foster Street
PO Box 351
Sale 3850

SEYMOUR

56 Tallarook Street
PO Box 235
Seymour 3660

SHEPPARTON

18 High Street
PO Box 607
Shepparton 3630

ST ARNAUD

Napier Street
PO Box 17
St Arnaud 3478

STAWELL

Patrick Street
PO Box 179
Stawell 3380

SUNSHINE

10 Foundry Road
PO Box 435
Sunshine 3020

SWAN HILL

121 Curlewis Street
PO Box 512
Swan Hill 3585

WANGARATTA

24 Faithfull Street
PO Box 504
Wangaratta 3677

WARRNAMBOOL

218 Koroit Street
PO Box 244
Warrnambool 3280

WERRIBEE

Cnr Duncans Road
& Salisbury Street
PO Box 196
Werribee 3030

WODONGA

5 Elgin Boulevard
PO Box 50
Wodonga 3690

WONTHAGGI

Watt Street
PO Box 104
Wonthaggi 3995

The background of the page is a solid dark blue. A large, lighter blue triangular shape is positioned on the left side, pointing towards the top right. This triangle contains a series of concentric, light blue circular lines that create a ripple effect. The text is located in the upper right corner of the page.

Magistrates' Court of Victoria
233 William Street
GPO Box 882
Melbourne 3001
mcv.vic.gov.au