



LAW  
INSTITUTE  
VICTORIA

# Criminal Law Section Annual Report 2025

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# 1 Overview

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## 1.1 Objectives of the Criminal Law Section

The Criminal Law Section was established by the Council of the Law Institute of Victoria (**LIV**) in 1979. The Section represents lawyers working in all areas of criminal law including defence, state and Commonwealth prosecutions, government, the courts, and academia.

The objectives of the Section are to:

- Further the objectives of the LIV;
- Stimulate the interests and participation of lawyers interested in areas of criminal law and to develop and conduct programmes of interest and value to lawyers and the community, including the provision of Continuing Professional Development events;
- Advise the Council and assist the Institute and its other Sections;
- Monitor policy, practice and legislative changes, conduct research and prepare written submissions and consider and recommend law reform initiatives;
- Maintain relationships between the legal profession and other stakeholders in the criminal justice system; and
- Promote the practice of criminal law.

The CLS comprises several Committees, Sub-Committees, and Working Groups, including:

- Executive Committee;
- General Committee;
- Children and Youth Issues Sub-Committee;
- Diversion Working Group;
- Practitioner Support and Wellbeing Action Group
- Homelessness Law Sub-Committee; and
- Prison Conditions Working Group

## 1.2 Current membership

The current membership of the Section is 2784.

## 1.3 Further information

The LIV's Sections and Committees webpage is regularly updated with the latest news on events, legislation, articles, and reports. The webpage provides information about the Section, including meeting dates, current projects, and details about joining the Section or a sub-committee.

For further information, please see [here](#).

## 2 Committees and Working Groups

### 2.1 Executive Committee

<b>Chairs:</b>	Jarrold Behan & Ben Watson
<b>Deputy Chairs:</b>	Jasmine Pisasale, Sarah Condon & Brett Barratt
<b>Section Lead:</b>	Teagan Townsend Gommers
<b>Paralegal:</b>	Charlie Metselaar

#### 2.1.1 Members

<b>ADDAMO, Ashlea</b> Leanne Warren & Associates	<b>COONEY, Alice</b> Environment Protection Authority	<b>McCARTHY, Jonathon</b> Office of Public Prosecutions
<b>BARRATT, Brett</b> James Dowsley & Associates	<b>CONDON, Sarah</b> Robinson Gill	<b>McFARLANE, Kim</b> McFarlane Criminal Lawyers
<b>BARRESE, David</b> David Barrese & Associates	<b>DOCHERTY, Luke</b> Doogue + George	<b>PARKER, Jayne</b> Victoria Police
<b>BEHAN, Jarrod</b> Jarrod Behan Law	<b>HARRISON, Leigh</b> Victori Police	<b>PISASALE, Jasmine</b> Slades & Parsons
<b>BESIROGLU, Ali</b> Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service	<b>JANE, Nick</b> Stary Norton Halphen	<b>RANKIN, Peter</b> Rankin Lawyers
<b>BLACKIE, Georgia</b> Office of Public Prosecutions	<b>JERONIMUS, Anoushka</b> WEstjustice	<b>VALOS, Ann</b> Ann Valos Criminal Law
<b>BOYLAN, Holly</b> Doogue + George	<b>LARKIN, Codie</b> Doogue + George	<b>WATSON, Ben</b> Johnstone and Reimer Lawyers

#### 2.1.2 Chair Report

*This year has been one of significant reform, challenge, and opportunity for the Criminal Law Section (CLS). Across 2025, the CLS has continued to provide strong, principled advocacy on behalf of the profession, particularly in response to major legislative changes to bail, committals, and youth justice in Victoria.*

*Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Jarrod Behan and Ben Watson, and with the tireless contributions of our Executive Committee members, the Section has remained at the forefront of policy debate and reform, ensuring the voices of Victorian criminal law practitioners are heard.*

*One of the most pressing issues this year has been the ongoing reform of Victoria's Bail Act. The Executive committee has advocated strongly to ensure that the legislative framework balances community safety with fundamental principles of justice and proportionality. In particular, the Committee expressed serious concern regarding the removal of the presumption that remand be used as a last resort for children.*

*The Executive emphasised that youth justice policy must be therapeutic, evidence-based, and grounded in rehabilitation rather than punishment. We continue to call on the Victorian Government to adopt approaches that address the underlying causes of offending - including disadvantage, trauma, and a lack of access to community-based supports, rather than relying on incarceration as a default response.*

*The Committee has also closely monitored and provided input on the pending changes to Victoria's committal process. With reforms now moving toward greater streamlining and potential limitations on cross-examination at early stages, the CLS has cautioned that such reforms must not come at the expense of procedural fairness and the accused's right to test the evidence.*

*Through ongoing engagement with the courts and government, the Executive has sought to ensure that committal reform enhances, rather than diminishes, the integrity of the criminal justice process. Our position remains clear: efficiency must never override fairness, and any procedural reform must preserve the safeguards that underpin just outcomes for all parties.*

*A major focus of our advocacy this year has been youth offending and the urgent need for holistic, system-wide change.*

*The Committee supported the Law Council of Australia's submission to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding General Comment No. 27, highlighting barriers faced by young people in Victoria's justice system—including financial hardship, limited mental health services, and systemic discrimination.*

*We also supported the LCA's submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee on Australia's youth justice and incarceration system. The CLS endorsed the diversionary measures introduced by the Youth Justice Act 2024 (Vic), especially those aimed at reducing the over-incarceration of First Nations children and young people.*

*In response to the proposed introduction of the "Post and Boast" offence, the Committee called on the Victorian Government to invest in evidence-based, community-led solutions to deter youth crime, such as early intervention programs, culturally safe supports, education pathways, and accessible rehabilitation services. The CLS continues to stress that meaningful youth justice reform must move beyond punitive responses toward a whole-of-system, rehabilitative approach.*

*We thank both Nick Jane and Natalie Tenaglia, Chairs of the Children and Youth Issues Committee for their expert knowledge and contribution in this ongoing advocacy work.*

*In addition to our youth justice work, the Committee:*

*Compiled and provided examples of funding challenges experienced by practitioners to Victoria Legal Aid, offering insight into the ongoing pressures on the system and in particular funding issues for private practitioners.*

*Established a working group to support the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) Advisory Group, identifying key operational issues with the new FAS portal.*

*Successfully resolved the issue at Melbourne Assessment Prison requiring three days' notice for professional visits, ensuring continued access for practitioners to clients in custody*

*The CLS also engaged in advocacy concerning the treatment of people experiencing homelessness, particularly in response to reports of private security personnel confiscating or destroying personal belongings of those sleeping rough in public spaces. The Committee raised concerns about the human rights implications of such conduct, emphasising that enforcement and compliance measures must be exercised with dignity, proportionality, and respect for basic human needs. The CLS continues to advocate for systemic, compassionate approaches to homelessness that prioritise social support, housing access, and the protection of vulnerable individuals over punitive or exclusionary practices.*

*Our commitment to collegiality and knowledge-sharing continued through several key events:*

- The joint networking event with the Criminal Bar Association (CrimBar) in June attracted over 100 attendees and fostered collaboration between solicitors and counsel at the Metropolitan Hotel.*
- The Criminal Law Conference 2025, themed "Navigating Change & Innovation in Criminal Law", brought together over 200 delegates and 24 speakers. Keynote presentations by Chief Judge Amanda Chambers and Justice Michael Croucher set the tone for rich discussions on committal reform, bail amendments, and the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on advocacy and disclosure. We look forward to concluding the year with the CLS Annual General Meeting and Networking Drinks, where members can reflect on the year's achievements and discuss the challenges ahead.*

*As 2025 draws to a close, the CLS remains steadfast in its mission to promote fairness, justice, and balance in Victoria's criminal justice system. The work of our Committees this year has ensured that the Section continues to be a respected, influential voice in legal reform.*

*Our deepest gratitude goes to those who have volunteered their time to the Executive Committee, contributing regularly to law reform submissions and tirelessly advocating for our members throughout the year. We also appreciate those who participated in the Section's Sub-Committees and Working Groups, as well as external Committees and Working Groups, such as the Courts' User Group meetings. Recognised as one of the most active sections within the Law Institute of Victoria, we are extremely thankful for the commitment our members demonstrate in balancing their demanding workloads with their contributions to our Committee.*

*We want to extend our sincere thanks to all members of the Criminal Law Section for their tireless commitment and contribution throughout the year. The work of a criminal lawyer is unrelenting, it demands resilience, compassion, and integrity in the face of immense pressure. Every day, our members navigate complex legal, ethical, and emotional challenges on behalf of clients whose liberty, dignity, and futures are at stake. The hours are long, the pay is rarely commensurate with the responsibility, and the time pressures are constant. Yet, what continues to set this profession apart is its remarkable camaraderie, a willingness to share knowledge, strategies, and support with one another to ensure justice is done. It is this collective strength, built on respect and shared purpose, that sustains us and ensures that the criminal law community remains one of the most principled and collegial corners of the legal profession.*

*Special thanks also go to our Section Lead Teagan Townsend Gommers and Paralegal Charlie Metselaar, whose exceptional organisational support and dedication have been instrumental to the success of our advocacy, events, and daily operations.*

*We look forward to continuing our work in 2026 - ensuring that every reform, every policy discussion, and every advocacy effort is guided by the principles of fairness, justice, and humanity that define our profession.*

**Jarrold Behan and Ben Watson**  
Co-Chairs, Criminal Law Section

## 2.2 General Committee

<b>Chairs:</b>	Jarrold Behan & Ben Watson
<b>Deputy Chairs:</b>	Jasmine Pisasale, Sarah Condon & Brett Barratt
<b>Section Lead:</b>	Teagan Townsend Gommers
<b>Paralegal:</b>	Charlie Metselaar

### 2.2.1 Members

ADDAMO, Ashlea	HAZMI, Gemma	READER, Alana
AABED, Anaki	HARRISON, Leigh	REIMER, Joshua
BARRATT, Brett	HEFFES, Laura	ROSS-McGLYNN, Gemma
BARRESE, David	HELMAN, Michael	SALTER, Caroline
BEALE, Sebastian	ISAACS, Szara	SARKAR, Lily
BEHAN, Jarrod	ISAACS, Tom	SAWANT, Sonia
BESIROGLU, Ali	JAYASURIA, Natasha	SIGAMONEY, Alyssa
BLACKIE, Georgia	JANE, Nick	SRILAKSHMANAN, Kanna
BLAKENEY, Caitlin	JERONIMUS, Anoushka	SMITH, Karyn
BOYLAN, Holly	KIDD, Paul	SMITH, Kathryn
BONNE, Walinda	KUOCH, Andy	STOBART, Nicole
BOURKE-LACEY, Edward	LARKIN, Codey	TENAGLIA, Natalie
BRANCATO, Jonathon	LEWIS, Jacqueline	TOOHEY, Madelaine
BRISTOW, Courtney	MATTHEWS, Kirsten	THEOCHAROUS, Tessa
BROWN, Nelson	McCARTHY, Jonathon	TURNBULL, Emma
CAMERON, Angus	McFARLANE, Kim	VALOS, Ann
CONDON, Sarah	McGARVIE, Jim	VASILIOU, Amanda
CONWELL, Louise	McCUSPIE, Jasper	VELUPILLAI, Esan
COOPER, Donna	MILLAR, Eleanor	WOLFF, Tania
COONEY, Alice	MURPHY, Ellen	WOODS, Mark
DERKLEY, Karin	MUNSTER, Julia	WILSON, Adam
DOBER, Erik	MURRELL, Alexander	WATERS, Zoe
DICKENSON, Eve	PARKER, Jayne	WATSON, Ben
DOCHERTY, Luke	PATEL, Nisha	
FRESHWATER, Kate	PISASALE, Jasmine	
FREDERICKSON, Holly	PUGH, Ian	
HADDEN, Dianne	RANKIN, Peter	
HALPHEN, Andrew		

## 2.2.2 Chair Report

*The General Committee welcomed a number of new members from diverse organisations and firms this year, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with them and our ongoing members throughout 2026.*

*In 2025, the Committee engaged deeply with a range of pressing developments and systemic challenges across the criminal justice landscape. These included the evolving operational settings in the Bail and Remand Court and the Melbourne Magistrates' Court, as well as the continuing implementation of the new Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme.*

*The Committee was privileged to hear from Ali Besiroglu, who spoke to the General Committee prior to joining the Executive. His presentation focused on bail reforms and the ongoing work of the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS), sparking valuable discussion on the direction of reform and its practical implications.*

*In addition to this engagement, the General Committee made a number of key contributions throughout the year, including:*

- Compiling examples of funding issues experienced in practice to provide Victoria Legal Aid with greater insight into the realities faced by practitioners, culminating in a letter sent to Toby Hemming.*
- Advocating on bail reform, expressing concern about the proposed removal of remand as a last resort for children, and emphasising the importance of a therapeutic justice approach.*
- Raising issues surrounding overcrowding in custody centres, highlighting the resulting impacts on both access to justice and practitioner and client wellbeing.*

*The Chairs extend their sincere thanks to all members of the General Committee for their ongoing commitment, valuable insights, and consistent attendance at meetings throughout the year. Despite the demanding nature of their own practices and the ever-increasing pressures of criminal law work, members have continued to contribute their time, experience, and perspective to the Committee's discussions and initiatives. Their engagement and collegiality remain vital to the Committee's strength and effectiveness.*

*The Committee remains committed to fostering collaboration, advancing reform, and ensuring that the voices and experiences of criminal law practitioners continue to inform policy and practice across Victoria.*

**Jarrold Behan & Ben Watson, Chairs**

## 2.3 Children and Youth Issues Sub-Committee

**Chairs:** Natalie Tenaglia  
**Deputy Chairs:** Nick Jane  
**Section Lead:** Teagan Townsend Gommers  
**Paralegal:** Charlie Metselaar

### 2.3.1 Members

ALLEN, Patrick	GORMAN, James Matthew	STRUDWICK, Andy
ANDERSON, Jenny	GORMAN, Joe	TENAGLIA, Natalie

BETTINK, Suzanne	HINTUM, Fiona	TINDALL, Barbara
BOWLER, Mehernaz	JANE, Nick	TOOHEY, Madelaine
CONWELL, Louise	MCNAUGHT, Kaye L	
DAY, Nicole	MILDREN, Jacob	
DOWLING McGREGOR, Andrew	SMOLJKO, Miriana	

### 2.3.2 Chair Report

*At the beginning of the year, the Children and Youth Issues Sub-Committee sadly bid farewell to former Chair Joel Orenstein after 7 years as chair of this committee. Whilst it was sad to see him go, we welcomed Nick Jane and Natalie Tenaglia as Co-Chairs of the committee.*

*Throughout this year, the CYIC has continued to engage in discussions and advocacy concerning both practical and policy issues related to child protection and youth crime. Some of the most pressing discussions centred around the Commencement of Electronic Monitoring, as well as the introduction of the new bail laws in Victoria earlier this year. The CYIC has also provided input into the Victorian Law Reform Commission's Family Violence Intervention Order Issues Paper, as well as engaged in discussions of great length with Youth Justice regarding bail assessments.*

*The CYIC provided an important submission to the Youth Justice Commissioner, Andrea Davidson, pertaining to the cancelling of youth-client conferences in custody. The LIV, with the aid of the CYIC, highlighted the adverse effect such cancellations have on vulnerable young persons, delaying court matters and undermining the legal process. The LIV noted the challenges with the quality of virtual conferences, connectivity issues and device unavailability, making it difficult for practitioners to engage with their young clients. The CYIC emphasized that timely access to conferences is necessary for upholding youths' rights and ensuring fair representation. This resulted in a productive meeting with the Youth Justice Commissioner, and an invitation to attend the court and custody liaison meetings going forward.*

*As was highlighted last year, since 2020, the Committee has also had a standing agenda item dedicated to a Legal Update from Suzanne Bettink of Victoria Legal Aid. This ongoing initiative ensures members receive regular insights into significant court decisions, legislative developments, and practice updates relevant to youth crime and child protection. Suzanne has consistently provided comprehensive written updates ahead of meetings and thoughtfully guided members through key issues during discussions. Her contributions have greatly enriched the Committee’s knowledge and engagement. We extend our sincere appreciation to Suzanne for her ongoing commitment and expertise — it is a privilege to have her participate in our meetings.*

*Looking ahead, the CYIC is eager to welcome additional experts in the field next year to further strengthen the Committee’s impact and effectiveness.*

**Natalie Tenaglia & Nick Jane, Chairs**

## 2.4 Diversion Committee

**Chairs:** David Barrese  
**Section Lead:** Teagan Townsend Gommers  
**Paralegal:** Charlie Metselaar

### 2.2.1 Members

BARRESE, David	JERONIMUS, Anoushka
DOCHERTY, Luke	WATSON, Ben
JANE, Nick	

### 2.2.2 Chair Report

*The LIV has been working on a discussion paper under its CLS Diversion Working Group proposing the integration of restorative justice principles into Victoria’s diversion system. This paper raises concerns about limitations in the current Criminal Justice Diversion Program and argues that a restorative justice approach that is centered on repairing harm, facilitating dialogue and accountability, could strengthen diversion outcomes etc.*

*The Paper has considered restorative justice diversionary programs in various jurisdictions in order to achieve a best practice model, whilst acknowledging the challenges of integrating such principles.*

*The LIV is hopeful this paper will encourage a discussion between respective stakeholders that will eventually see the implementation of the restorative justice principles as noted above.*

**David Barrese, Chair**

## 2.5 Homelessness Law Committee

**Chairs:** Peter Rankin  
**Section Lead:** Teagan Townsend Gommers  
**Paralegal:** Charlie Metselaar

### 2.5.1 Members

KUOCH, Andy	RANKIN, Peter
QUINN SCIASCIA, Nadia	WATSON, Ben

### 2.5.2 Chair Report

*This year, the Homelessness Law Sub-Committee has continued its strong advocacy efforts throughout the year, focusing on the issues directly impacting people experiencing homelessness and those providing support.*

*The Sub-Committee proactively advocated a response to the City of Melbourne's Security Guard Pilot Program, preparing a detailed letter to the Lord Mayor of Melbourne. This raised serious concerns surrounding the reports of local officers and contracted guards moving on people experiencing homelessness without cause, and in some cases, confiscating essential personal belongings such as identification, clothing and medication.*

*The LIV, through this Sub-Committee, urged the council to reassess the program and sought a meeting to discuss ways to better protect the rights and wellbeing of those experiencing homelessness. This advocacy resulted in a constructive meeting with the City of Melbourne's Head of Security, Safety and Amenities, providing an important opportunity to communicate the legal community's concerns and propose more humane approaches to managing public space and community safety.*

*In the wake of 11 new staff being employed by the Council as of the end of October, to patrol the city, known as "community safety officers", our sub-committee will continue to advocate for the rights of homeless people.*

*Throughout the year, the Sub-Committee also engaged with other organisations providing advocacy and support for homeless people, such as Launch Housing.*

*Howard Ralley from Launch spoke at one of our meetings and shared insights into current housing and service delivery challenges and emerging policy responses.*

*We will continue to foster connections between the legal profession and community sector. The Sub-Committee looks forward to building on this work in the coming year.*

**Peter Rankin, Chair**

## 2.6 Practitioner Support and Wellbeing Action Group

**Chair:** Kim McFarlane  
**Section Lead:** Teagan Townsend Gommers  
**Paralegal:** Charlie Metselaar

### 2.6.1 Members

BARRATT, Brett	DOCHERTY, Peter	McFARLANE, Kim
BOYLAN, Holly	HALL, Jo	PISASALE, Jasmine
DOCHERTY, Luke	JERONIMUS, Anoushka	RANKIN, Peter

### 2.6.2 Chair Report

*It is with great delight that I share that I took over being the Chair of the Practitioner Support and Wellbeing Action Group after Mr Joel Orenstein stood down to pursue other interests.*

*In the last 12 months the Practitioner Support and Wellbeing Action Group has changed it's name from Judicial Conduct and Practitioner Wellness Working Group to Practitioner Support and Wellbeing Action Group to better reflect its purpose and directions. This has assisted with ongoing drafting of the groups Terms of Reference which will be finalised in due course.*

*The committee is very lucking to have Emily Knowles, LIV's Wellbeing Manager, as a new member to provide insights into the Institute's ongoing initiatives and programs supporting lawyer wellbeing. The committee will be able to utilise Ms Knowles knowledge in ensuring that our members are fully across the*

*Practitioner support and wellbeing are so important in ensuring that members of the legal professional are looked after especially with the level of high stress legal careers entail. Please keep an eye out for the next developments of this committee.*

**Kim McFarlane, Chair**

## 2.7 Prison Conditions Working Group

**Chairs:** Peter Rankin  
**Section Lead:** Teagan Townsend Gommers  
**Paralegal:** Charlie Metselaar

### 2.7.1 Members

BARRATT, Brett	PUGH, Ian	SRILAKSHMANAN, Kanna
CONDON, Sarah	RANKIN, Peter	VALOS, Ann
McCARTHY, Jonathon	READER, Alana	
McFARLANE, Kim	SHARP, Sebastian	

### 2.7.2 Chair Report

*The Prison Conditions Sub-Committee met bi-monthly throughout 2025, continuing its ongoing advocacy to improve the wellbeing and treatment of individuals in custody across Victoria. Members reported significant concerns pertaining to overcrowding, extended lockdowns, and restricted access to legal representation.*

*The LIV wrote to the Commissioner of Corrections following discussions within the Sub-Committee, to raise concerns about capacity pressures in Victorian Prisons. This was particularly in short-stay and transitional custody centres such as the Melbourne Custody Centre, compounded by staff shortages and a surge in remand numbers following the introduction of the 2025 bail reforms. The submission urged a stronger focus on housing prisoners in facilities equipped to meet health and welfare needs and invited Corrections Victoria to engage further with the LIV to explore practical solutions.*

*In July 2025, the LIV, on behalf of the Sub-Committee sent a detailed follow-up letter to the Commissioner addressing ongoing operational and procedural barriers impacting legal practitioners and their clients. The letter sought to clarify policies surrounding legal practitioner identification requirements and urgent client phone calls. The correspondence also requested updates on the replacement of the Jabber Guest platform, raised concerns about the availability of data on lockdown days and custody condition reports, and called for greater transparency around Forensic Intervention Services programs and parole eligibility processes.*

*Further, the Sub-Committee instigated a letter to the Assistant Commissioner to provide comments on the Melbourne Assessment Prison's three-day notice requirement for professional visit requests. In the letter, the LIV raised concerns that the new policy appears inconsistent with the Corrections Regulations 2019, which permit lawyers to visit clients between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. without any advance notice. It called for clarification of the new procedure, requested a copy of the formal policy, and sought a meeting with Corrections Victoria to explore potential solutions ensuring that legal practitioners can access clients promptly. Our advocacy resulted in the three day notice period being removed. We also during 2025*

*advocated on behalf of young persons in custody at various locations who were not being allowed proper access to legal practitioners for the purposes of giving instructions in their legal matters.*

*The Sub-Committee is currently advocating on the issue of excessive use of police cells in suburban areas and regional Victoria to keep prisoners for extended periods.*

*We welcomed, during 2025, Shaun Maxwell from G4S, who provided an overview of the company's custodial services, including prisoner transport and facility operations. This presentation offered valuable insights into the challenges faced by private service providers and the operational realities within Victorian prisons.*

*The Sub-Committee extends its sincere thanks to all members for their continued engagement and expertise throughout 2025.*

**Peter Rankin, Chair**

## 3 Activities and Events

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### 3.1 Submissions and Proactive Advocacy

Since the last Annual Report, the Criminal Law Section has been active in making the following written submissions to the State Government, Federal Government, and relevant stakeholders and contributed to the following media releases and advocacy including:

Letters:

- Letter to the Honourable Michael O'Brien MP, Re: Justice Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2025 (the Bill);
- Letter to Assistant Commissioner Jenny Hosking, Re: Melbourne Assessment Prison's ('MAP') 3-Day Notice Requirement for Professional Visit Requests;
- Letter to Corrections, Re: Legal Practitioner Identification, client phone calls, digital signing of authority forms etc;
- Letter to the Victorian Attorney-General, Re: Corrections Legislation Amendment Bill 2025;
- Letter to Toby Hemming, Chief Executive of VLA, Re: VLA Legal Assistance Funding;
- Letter to the Youth Justice Commissioner, Re: Conferences in Youth Detention;
- Letter to the Victorian-Attorney General, Re: Post and Boast- Crimes Amendment (Performance Crime) Bill 2025 (Vic);
- Letter to the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Re: City of Melbourne's Security guard Pilot Program;
- Letter to the Corrections Commissioner, Re: Capacity pressures in Victorian Prisons.

Submissions:

- Restorative Justice Paper, Re: The Integration of Restorative justice principles into Victoria's diversion system;
- Submission to the Law Council of Australia, Re: Parliamentary Inquiry into the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Amendment Bill (No 2) 2025 (Cth) (ASIO Bill). Access [here](#).

Media Releases:

- 'LIV reiterates that tougher bail laws will not make the community safer in the long-term.' Access [here](#).
- 'More on remand does not achieve long-term community safety.'
- 'LIV believes new 'post and boast' laws unnecessary and locking up kids for longer won't make the community safer.' Access [here](#).

### 3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

The Criminal Law Section continued to liaise with Government and Non-Government bodies on a number of broad issues. Notable stakeholder engagements and meetings this year have included:

- Meetings with the Youth Justice Commissioner,
- Discussions with Shaun Maxwell from G4S on the new Melbourne Custody Centre Welfare Program taken over from St Vincent's de Paul,
- Meetings with the head of Security, Safety and Amenities with the City of Melbourne.

### 3.3 Professional Development and Events

The CLS has been active in the development of continued professional development (**CPD**) units to LIV members in 2025, including the LIV and Magistrates' Court of Victoria CPD Series Sessions.

The MCV Sessions run in 2025 included:

- Specialist FV Courts, presented by Magistrate Hodgson, and chaired by Jasmine Pisasale;
- Specialist Courts and Therapeutic Justice, presented by Magistrate Pauline Spencer and Magistrate Rose Falla, and chaired by Jarrod Behan;
- The Criminal Law Conference, which was held on 26 and 27 June 2025 and featured topical sessions on bail reform, insights into SORA registration, and the practical implications of AI in criminal practice. The program aimed to demystify recent developments in criminal law and explain their practical implications, empowering members with the knowledge and skills to confidently advise their clients.