



EQUALITY IS NOT THE SAME... PHASE TWO

ANNUAL REPORT CARD 2017-18



VICTORIA POLICE

INTRODUCTION

Under the *Equality is not the same...* Three Year Action Plan (2014–2016) Victoria Police laid the foundation to ensure we are an accessible and respectful organisation, responsive to the needs and expectations of Victoria’s diverse community.

There are many challenges in meeting the needs of a diverse community and stakeholder expectations. However, Victoria Police is committed to delivering sustainable change in a measured and visible manner that strikes the right balance between engagement and enforcement. Being transparent and accountable to the community through regular engagement, and fair and respectful law enforcement is critical to safeguarding community confidence and trust in Victoria Police.

Equality is not the same... Phase Two (2017–2020) is a three year program of work that continues our commitments initiated in the Three Year Action Plan, but with a focus on demonstrating change where it matters – in our frontline service delivery and every-day engagement with Victorians. Importantly, Phase Two forms just one part of a suite of organisational investment and commitment to cultural change. *Equality is not the same...* complements the body of work emanating from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Review being undertaken by Victoria Police, our Mental Health Review and responses to recent IBAC reports including the Audit of complaints investigated by Professional Standards Command, Victoria Police.

The focus throughout Phase Two will be to progressively embed the learnings and outcomes of *Equality is not the same...* into our business as usual activities, so the founding pillars of communication, respect and dignity, cultural capability, community engagement and transparency and accountability are evident in all that we do.

In our Year Three Report released in December 2016 we committed to:

Progressing delivery reform over the next two years by:

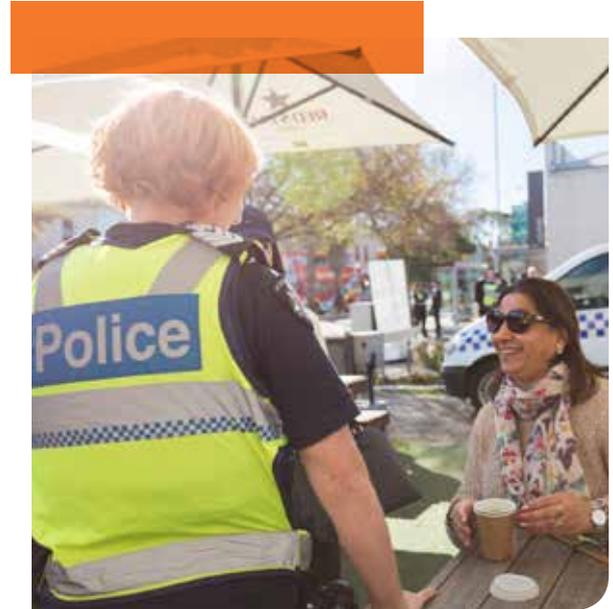
- Implementing the recommendations of the Receipting Proof of Concept evaluation
- Continuing to explore the interface of data collection/monitoring initiatives
- Continuing to implement the Victoria Police Community Engagement Strategy, with a focus on strengthening our engagement at the community level
- Visibly demonstrating human rights and values-based decision making to reduce the impact and influence of bias
- Aligning the outputs and outcomes of *Equality is not the same...* with other key organisational commitments with a focus on ensuring Victoria Police serves the community with professionalism, respect, impartiality and integrity

Promoting transparency and accountability by:

- Continuing to work with communities to improve their confidence and trust to report and engage in the Victoria Police complaints and compliments process
- Raising awareness of our actions and commitments particularly to the diverse and harder to reach communities in Victoria

Measuring, monitoring and demonstrating reform by:

- Publishing Annual Report Cards at the end of each financial year
- Commencing baseline measurement and conducting organisational and community pulse checks to assess and inform our progress.





OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

As part of our commitment to embed the outputs and outcomes of *Equality is not the same...* with other key organisational commitments, we have realigned to financial year reporting. As such, this is the first Annual Report Card (2017–2018) for *Equality is not the same...* Phase Two.

The presentation of this Annual Report Card reflects our commitment to continue reporting to the community on what we are doing to progress our program of change. Over the course of *Equality is not the same...* Victoria Police has progressively increased its commitment to community engagement and transparent and accountable policing. We have now moved to this more concise reporting format as this allows us to better present the significant work that Victoria Police is undertaking to support and drive change. However, to ensure consistency with previous reporting, we will continue to report our activities against the pillars that formed the basis of our initial Three Year Action Plan.



Figure 1: *Equality is not the same...* pillars





TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: INCREASED TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN POLICE SERVICES

Over the past year we have:

■ Established the Transparency and Accountability Monitoring Group

This group comprises representatives from the Chief Commissioner's Human Rights Strategic Advisory Committee, including key advocacy and law reform groups that will assist us in exploring the challenges of data collection and monitoring the application of human rights across Victoria Police activities.

■ Commenced the introduction of body worn cameras

We have commenced the state-wide deployment of body worn cameras in two initial locations to deliver improved justice outcomes in local communities. The policy and procedures for use of the cameras have been developed with community consultation. Any lessons from these two sites will guide further use and deployments of the cameras. The Chief Commissioner's Human Rights Strategic Advisory Committee assisted in informing the policy and procedures supporting the application and use of body worn cameras.

■ Revised our physical descriptors for ethnic appearance

As of 1 July 2018, ethnic appearance descriptors will align with the Australian and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) standard. The revision applies to all electronic and paper based applications which frontline police and Protective Service Officers (PSOs) use to record the perceived ethnic appearance of individuals. This includes victims, suspects, offenders, missing persons and persons recorded as a result of a 'field contact'.

■ Developed the Victoria Police contact card

This card provides police and PSOs with a professional resource to provide their details to members of the community. The card includes information on how to access a range of services, including victim support and how to make a compliment or complaint. Two prototype contact cards were trialled for a two week period at both Ballarat and Dandenong police stations where police were able to provide feedback about the functionality of the card to ensure it was fit for purpose in a wide range of engagements with community. A phased awareness campaign will help to ensure the community has accessible information regarding the contact card. The introduction of the contact card will complement the phased roll out of body worn cameras and forms just one part of Victoria Police's commitment to increase accountability and better interaction between police and the community.

■ Included Cultural, Community and Diversity (CCD) and human rights resources into 'Unlock the Vault'

Professional Standards Command's (PSC) 'Unlock the Vault' is an internal tool used to promote positive change in behaviour by reflecting on past experiences. This publication draws on a range of case studies and findings from internal discipline hearings and commissions of inquiry and is circulated quarterly across layers of the organisation. The 'Human Rights is Every Day Policing' e-Learning module, Human Rights Equity and Diversity Standards and CCD Resource Hub feature as resources for reflective learning to build organisational capability.



ENGAGEMENT: IMPROVED CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

Over the past year we have:

■ Re-established the Victoria Police Aboriginal Portfolio Reference Group

The Reference Group will provide genuine opportunity for Aboriginal decision making and oversight. It will use self-determining governance framework for Victoria Police to support delivery of current and future initiatives arising from the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF), the Aboriginal Justice Agreement Phase Four (AJA4) and other strategic initiatives.

■ Conducted a Victoria Police Interfaith Forum

We held an Interfaith Forum to support police participation in Local Government Area (LGA) Interfaith Committees.

■ Implemented 18 Social Cohesion Projects across the state

18 local police service areas have engaged with community representatives from their multicultural communities, in particular women and young people, and have partnered with these communities to undertake projects to address drivers of social isolation and improve local social cohesion. These partnerships have helped to strengthen the Victoria Police community engagement infrastructure to enable early identification of emerging issues in addition to providing an opportunity to engage with communities that are not known to regularly engage with police.

■ Established the Victoria Police Multi-Faith Youth Council

To improve our engagement and understand the issues and experiences of young people from diverse faiths, we have established a Victoria Police Multi-Faith Youth Council. The Council provides an avenue for the views of young people of faith to be considered in the development of Victoria Police initiatives.

■ Established Community Safety Networks

In partnership with the Department of Justice we have held 16 community forums across Victoria, engaging with over 2000 people to understand their local community safety concerns and needs and expectations of local police. The issues raised with police in these discussions and online are being used to guide local crime prevention projects and, where appropriate, local policing priorities.

■ Created the African Australian Community Taskforce

Victoria Police supported the establishment of an African Australian Community Taskforce to help identify emerging issues and trends and to utilise community expertise to work with Victoria Police (and other government agencies and service providers) on the development and delivery of initiatives that focus on youth offending, recidivism and anti-social behaviours. The Taskforce will also provide advice on issues of racial vilification, lateral violence and other crimes affecting the African Communities of Victoria.

■ Expanded the Victoria Police Eyewatch network

Victoria Police completed the roll out of active Eyewatch Facebook pages to all 54 police service areas across Victoria in May 2018. As of August 2018, over 400,000 people have 'liked' Victoria Police Eyewatch pages. Eyewatch pages have helped improve connection between Victoria Police and their local communities by providing an open forum for residents across Victoria to connect with local police to share information about safety issues and help police to solve crimes in their local area.



The inaugural Aboriginal Portfolio Reference Group meeting



UNDERSTANDING AND CAPABILITY: MORE CULTURALLY CAPABLE WORKFORCE

Over the past year we have:

■ Continued enhancement of the Cultural Community and Diversity (CCD) Resource Hub

This online learning platform is available to all Victoria Police employees. It contains a range of contemporary resources that have been developed in partnership with community stakeholders. Some of the resources include information on responding to people with autism, LGBTI language fact sheets and information on policing young people in public spaces.

■ Continued to strengthen Victoria Police promotional programs

We have supported the design and delivery of promotional programs to ensure CCD and human rights principles are embedded and assessed. This has included the introduction of community panels at the Police Managers Qualifying Program (PMQP) helping to ensure Victoria Police middle and senior management participants are hearing and engaging with the community to work in partnership through complex social issues. It also encourages them to use critical thinking to adapt their service delivery to meet the needs of diverse communities.

■ Delivered specialist human rights professional development

We delivered human rights awareness and professional development to specialist areas of the organisation. This has included the Critical Incident Response Team and Operations Response Unit.

■ Implemented the Cultural Community and Diversity Educator Program

This one day course is designed to provide everyone who instructs Victoria Police recruits, PSOs, and police custody officers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver content on the diversity of the Victorian community, culture and human rights principles.

COMMUNICATION, RESPECT AND DIGNITY: COMMUNICATION IS ACCESSIBLE, RESPECTFUL AND DIGNIFIED

Over the past year we have:

■ Commenced the Communications Access Accreditation Pilot Project

The Communications Access Accreditation Pilot Project (CAAPP) is a collaboration with Scope (Australia) which aims to increase the capability of staff at one 24 hour Police Station to communicate effectively and respectfully with people with communication difficulties. A survey of station staff, role-plays with people with communication difficulties and one-on-one interviews with staff have been conducted to identify current barriers and enablers of effective communication between police and people with communication difficulties.

■ Reviewed the Victoria Police Multicultural Media Strategy

We have reviewed the Victoria Police Multicultural Media Strategy and have found that we can strengthen our communication with our Proactive Liaison Officers and multicultural media to ensure we continue to represent diversity through our media platforms.



Victoria Police Pride Launch

NEXT STEPS

Victoria Police is continuing to build sustainable, whole of organisation reform in order to strengthen community trust and confidence in police. Over the course of the past year we have increased the availability of accessible resources to our employees to support improved knowledge and awareness of cultural diversity and the application of human rights in service delivery. This has been evidenced by over 21,000 views recorded on fact sheets hosted on our Cultural, Community and Diversity (CCD) Resource Hub and direct requests for support in human rights training by specialist teams such as the Operations Response Unit (ORU) and Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT). We have integrated key deliverables such as the contact card with key frontline initiatives such as the body worn camera (BWC) pilot in Epping and Ballarat Police Stations. Our community stakeholders have been directly engaged to inform policy and practice in high profile initiatives such as the BWC pilot and modernised crowd control equipment roll out by the ORU.

Over the next 12 months we will continue to drive cultural reform by:

- Strengthening the support and consistency of the Proactive Liaison Officer roles, with a focus on identifying the activities that inform and influence confidence and trust in police and creating supportive communities of practice
- Strengthening the organisation's understanding and application of human rights practices with a focus on education and professional development opportunities, improving risk assessment processes, and further embedding human rights considerations into operational resources.
- Reviewing the implementation of the CCD Education Strategy to determine whether there is evidence of a capability lift and whether we have elevated our priorities in relation to CCD and Human Rights across the Victoria Police Academy curriculum.
- Professional Standards Command working towards changes that will enhance processes, services, and practice of oversight that protects the public from wrongful acts by police, develops the integrity of serving police officers and consequently maintains public confidence in policing.
- Continuing to build our capacity to identify and use indicators to better demonstrate and monitor sustainable change delivered through the *Equality is not the same...* program of work.
- Providing regular updates to stakeholders regarding Priority Communities Division activities.



If you would like to know more on any of these initiatives please contact the Priority Communities Division by emailing us at: OFFICE-OF-COMMANDER-PCD@police.vic.gov.au

Victoria Police pay our respect to the traditional owners of lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who continue to care for their country, culture and people.

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