

Youth Parole Board

Annual Report 2023–24



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The department is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and recognises that children's rights need to be respected, their views welcomed and valued, and their concerns taken seriously and acted upon.

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Where the term 'Aboriginal' is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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The Department of Justice and Community Safety delivers high-quality services to Victorians and supports a safe, just, innovative and thriving Victoria.



Letter to the Minister

The Hon. Enver Erdogan
Minister for Youth Justice
Level 16, 121 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE 3000


Dear Minister,

In accordance with the requirements of section 452 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, I submit this report on the operations of the Victorian Youth Parole Board for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 for presentation to Parliament.

The report contains information about:

- the number of persons returned to a youth justice centre or youth residential centre on cancellation of parole
- the number of persons released on parole by the Board
- the operation and activities of the Board and of youth parole officers during the 12-month period.

Yours sincerely



Her Honour Judge Claire Quin
Chairperson, Youth Parole Board

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Chairperson's message



As Chairperson of the Youth Parole Board, I am always deeply grateful for the commitment and support of the alternate Chairs, all Board members and the Secretariat, with 2023–24 being no exception.

The Board's Secretariat, consisting this year of Mishell Warner, Lucy Maule, Alana Mondre, Alyssa Fava, Alyssa Moore and Greta Ryan, are a dedicated, professional and hardworking team. The Secretariat support the Board to operate effectively ensuring deliberations are informed by accurate and quality information at all times. The Board relies on the Secretariat to provide additional feedback to Youth Justice and care teams, and we have confidence that this occurs in a manner that facilitates positive outcomes for young people before us.


Further, the Board values its important relationship with custodial and community Youth Justice teams, and stakeholders from the broader services system. I note the quality of information before the Board, including during professional interviews, is reflective of the high standard of case practice and service delivery provided to young people. Recommendations and advice provided by all professionals is highly trusted and respected by all Board members.

To my fellow Board members, I am consistently impressed by the diversity of your skills, expertise and insights. Your knowledge of case practice excellence is matched by your warm and effective approaches to engaging with young people, and the care teams of professionals supporting them. I am also appreciative of the respectful, inclusive and productive manner in which our

varying perspectives are heard at Board sittings. I am however concerned about the delay in re-appointments – the Board has had a vacancy in respect of a Community member for over 12 months – we are missing a valuable resource and input from the community.

In any event, I have full confidence that the Board's decision-making is of the highest quality, in the best interests of young people and has a positive influence on the service system. I do truly believe that the Board makes a genuine contribution to public safety, this also evidenced by the Board maintaining the ongoing confidence of the Victorian community.

I wish to thank the alternate Chairs who supported me during 2023–24, His Honour Judge Scott Johns and His Honour Judge David Sexton. Thank you for your counsel and leadership. The Board is lucky to benefit from depth of your experiences leading the County Koori and County Drug Courts respectively. You have both supported me in ensuring the efficient running of meetings and a consistent approach to Parole decisions and reasoning whether for granting, cancelling or transferring orders.



**Much can be gained
from listening and
responding to young
people's voices.**

I want to particularly acknowledge His Honour Judge Johns, who was appointed as alternate Chairperson of the Youth Parole Board in April 2021, and who completed his term on 12 April 2024. Judge Johns has been a great source of support to myself and other Board members, particularly while navigating challenges to the Board's operations throughout the COVID pandemic and whilst I had extended leave. Judge Johns' knowledge of the justice system has particularly benefitted the outcomes of Aboriginal young people before the Board. His genuine care for the wellbeing of young people is highly apparent. I wish Judge Johns well in his continued leadership of the County Koori Court and he is aware that he is welcome to return to the board if the opportunity arises in future.

Recognising Carmel Guerra OAM

Carmel Guerra OAM completed her final term on 17 May 2024 after nearly 14 years of service to the Board. Carmel's contribution to the Board over this time is significant to say the least. Carmel has always provided invaluable links between the Board and the community services sector for youth, and particularly young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. This is particularly so in relation to her involvement with the African Australian community and also young people on parole in immigration detention. Her connections to relevant organisations and advocacy on behalf of some of our young people has seen positive results and good outcomes.



Board members Michelle Wood, Carmel Guerra OAM and Chairperson Judge Claire Quin on Carmel's last Youth Parole Board sitting after 14 years of service.

Carmel's discussions with young people before the Board, though often involving serious matters, always included a sense of empathy and optimism. Her sound and trusted judgement has been invaluable to me over the years, particularly during complex and sometimes difficult decision-making processes. I thank Carmel for her friendship, support and all she has taught me during our time on the Board together and look forward to hearing about her continued work and advocacy for young Victorians, in her role as Chief Executive Officer for the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

Youth Parole Board activity 2023–24

Although there has been a reduction in numbers of young people under the Board's jurisdiction there has been sizeable increase in the number of individual young people subject to youth justice centre orders during 2023–24, following a previous five-year period of decline.

Young people sentenced to youth justice centre orders, while relatively low in number, tend to require the most intensive level of supervision, intervention and monitoring in the community. This approach seeks to minimise the risk of reoffending while young people are supported to engage in treatment and pro-social activity, and therefore protect the community.

The Youth Parole Board Annual Report consistently reports on the levels of complexity present in the lives of young people in custody. I particularly note the characteristics of young people in custody and the increase, by 12% since 2023–24, in young people reporting a history of self-harm, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts.

At the 2024 Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne lecture, which was held in April, we learnt from keynote speaker, Dr Keith Cruise, about the need to further enhance the case management based on the principles of risks, needs and responsivity. Dr Cruise outlined an approach to more strongly accommodate the high prevalence of complex trauma and mental health disorders in young people in contact with Youth Justice, as a key responsivity issue impacting the risk of reoffending.

Aboriginal children and young people remain disproportionately over-represented as compared to non-Aboriginal peers. I note an increase in the number of youth justice centre orders issued to Aboriginal young people in 2023–24. At the Larry Osborne lecture held in August 2023, we heard a very moving address from academic Dr Jordan Gibbs. This inspired an awareness of the complex social, cultural and historical challenges that make Aboriginal young people more vulnerable to contact with Youth Justice.

This increase requires a high level of scrutiny to ensure Victoria remains on track to meet key commitments to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in detention. I am hopeful that the previous positive trends in reducing these numbers resumes in 2024–25 and that Victoria’s first Aboriginal Youth Justice Strategy, *Wirkara Kulpa* continues to be implemented in full.

Clearly, the African Australian population remains an over-represented cohort of young people in custody. I am keen to see progress made by and receive advice from the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group that has been established.

Additionally, at the Board’s annual policy day, we heard from a panel of three young adults with lived experience of the criminal justice system, from an African Australian perspective. The young men

relayed their experiences about being before the Board, transitioning from custody to the community on parole and the supports that enabled them to desist from reoffending. It was very hopeful to hear about the significant contributions these young men are making to their families, the economy and to their communities today, which is a number of years beyond the successful completion of their parole orders. Much can be gained from listening and responding to young peoples voices.

Opening of the new Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct

Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct began accommodating young people on 21 August 2023 and I am pleased to see many achievements at the Precinct over the course of the year for the 15 to 17 year-old young men on sentence and long term remand. This includes good results from the newly implemented Youth Justice workforce model, the new in-house clinical team that provides offence-specific criminogenic and psychosocial programs and the recent opening of the bespoke mental health unit. The Board visited the Cherry Creek facility and was taken on a tour of various parts of it – I look forward to observing its operations when they are fully functioning and also for the Board to occasionally hold its meetings there with suitable facilities if the need arises.



Board member Michelle Wood; Chairperson Judge Claire Quin; and Board member Chuol Puot at a Youth Parole Board meeting in 2024

Parkville Youth Justice Precinct has been re-established to support the dual track cohort, which make up a sizeable portion of the Board's jurisdiction. I am pleased to see some positive employment outcomes via revised pathways established for this cohort, and with thanks to the Parkville College Transitions Team. I have also seen an increase of leaves being granted prior to the young person's release on parole to home and places of employment, to assist in the transition of the young person from custody to the community. These are positive outcomes following the closure of Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct from 31 December 2023, which I acknowledged in last year's message.

Youth Justice Act 2024

I would like to take this opportunity recognise the *Youth Justice Act 2024* and the enormous efforts of all involved at the Department of Justice and Community Safety, in its development over the past seven years. I appreciate the significant level of consultation involved with a broad range of experts and key stakeholders, including many Board members over this time.

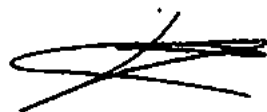
The significant reforms enabled by this modern legislative framework include raising the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 12, the new pre-charge diversion options, changes to enable young people on bail or remand to participate in treatment and rehabilitation programs earlier. There are specific measures for Aboriginal children and young people, and building blocks for a self-determined Aboriginal youth justice system in the future. I further acknowledge key reforms for the Board, include formalising a Youth Justice Victims Register and introducing pre-release restorative conferencing for young people prior to their release on parole.

In respect of the provisions that have come into operation regarding bail in September 2024, and the trial of electronic monitoring of bail conditions due to commence in the first half of 2025, it will be interesting to monitor the impact of these changes on the numbers of young people in custody on remand.

I am pleased that specific guiding principles, sentencing principles, custodial principles and rights for young Victorians who come to the attention of the criminal justice system will be enshrined in legislation. Despite recent media reporting, it is not my observation, nor supported by long-term data, that there is a broad based 'youth crime crisis' in Victoria. Contrary to such reports, at the end of March 2024 the Crime Statistics Agency reported that while there had been a recent increase, the youth offending rate for the previous 12 months was relatively low, when compared to peaks recorded in 2008 and 2010¹.

The Youth Justice Act 2024 protects the importance of a distinct and specialised approach to delivering justice to young people. It recognises the evidence outlined in the 2017 Armytage Ogloff Review – that with the right supports and opportunities, young people can turn their lives around and go on to make a meaningful contribution to the community.

I look forward to the 2024–2025 period working with new alternate chair Judge Kellie Blair (appointed on 16 July 2024) and other developments in Youth Justice, particularly given the operation of some of the new provisions in that timeframe.



Her Honour Judge Claire Quin

Chairperson
Youth Parole Board

¹ Crime Statistics Agency end of March 2024 data: The youth offending rate in the previous 12 months (3,365.4 per 100,000 young people) remains low when compared to recorded peaks seen in 2008 (4,161.3 per 100,000 young people) and 2010 (4,446.3 per 100,000 young people).

Board members



Chairperson, Her Honour Judge Claire Quin

Her Honour Judge Claire Quin is a sitting judge in the County Court of Victoria. Judge Quin has 3 decades of experience in criminal law, starting as a volunteer solicitor at the Western Suburbs Legal Service, becoming a judge's associate in the County Court and then a barrister in private practice. Judge Quin was also senior legal counsel in the Victorian Parliament's Family and Community Development Committee inquiry, which resulted in the Betrayal and Trust Report, and a Crown prosecutor in the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations. These roles allowed Judge Quin to finetune her understanding of the impact of complex trauma on children, young people and adults.

Her Honour was appointed as an alternate chairperson of the Youth Parole Board on 1 January 2018 and chairperson on 1 July 2019.



Alternate Chairperson, Judge David Sexton

His Honour Judge David Sexton has been a serving judge of the County Court of Victoria since 2018. Judge Sexton is currently head of the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court at the County Court, a coordinating judge of the County Court's Court Integrated Services Program, and regularly sits in the County Koori Court. Judge Sexton has appeared at all levels of the criminal law jurisdiction in Victoria and interstate and has significant experience in matters involving sexual offending. He signed the Victorian Bar Roll in 2004 and was an in-house advocate for the Children's Court, Magistrates Court, County Court and Supreme Court at Victoria Legal Aid from 2002 to 2004. Judge Sexton was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1994.

His Honour was appointed as an alternate chairperson of the Youth Parole Board on 27 June 2023.



Alternate Chairperson, Judge Scott Johns

His Honour Judge Scott Johns has been a serving judge in the County Court of Victoria since August 2018 and is currently the judge in charge of the County Koori Court. Judge Johns' interest in improving the experience of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system initially led to his early work as a solicitor at the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service in 2001. On his return to Melbourne, His Honour was a senior public defender (Criminal Law Division) for Victoria Legal Aid. Judge Johns signed the Bar Roll in May 2003 and was appointed a Silk in November 2017. Judge Johns was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Victoria in May 1992.

His Honour was appointed as an alternate chairperson of the Youth Parole Board on 13 April 2021 and completed his term on 12 April 2024.



Community Member, Dr Stephane Shepherd

Dr Stephane Shepherd is Professor of Forensic Psychology and Criminology at Deakin University. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Criminology) and a master's degree and PhD in forensic psychology. Dr Shepherd has produced an extensive body of research on the social, cultural and mental health needs of young people who have contact with the justice system. His work also considers how practitioners and support professionals can work more effectively and culturally responsively with justice-involved young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Dr Shepherd has received multiple awards in recognition of his work in the sector. He was awarded the Victorian Government Multicultural Award for Justice in 2020 and was named one of ABC's Top 5 Scientists Under 40 in 2020. He also received the American Psychology-Law Society Early Career

Award in 2019, the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services Young Scholar of the year in 2016 and was a Fulbright Scholar in 2015. Dr Shepherd has extensive community board experience, including being appointed to the Victorian Government's African Communities Committee.

Dr Shepherd was appointed as community member of the Youth Parole Board on 30 June 2022.



Alternate Community Member, Susan Hancox

Susan Hancox has been the coordinator of the Youth Justice Mental Health Initiative since early 2019. During her time as coordinator, she completed her clinical psychology registrar program including 2 years (part-time) of clinical work at Thomas Embling Hospital. Prior to her move to Forensicare, Susan worked at Orygen Youth Health for 15 years as a senior social worker. Across that time she worked in acute and forensic roles and as the chief social worker. Susan worked privately as the counsellor for Queens College from 2016 to 2017 and as a sessional teacher at La Trobe University from 2007 to 2009. Prior to her career as a mental health clinician, Susan was a registered nurse from 1987 to 1996. She has an undergraduate degree in social work from RMIT, graduate diploma and honours in psychology and a clinical master's in psychology from Victoria University and a

Master of Counselling and Human Services from La Trobe University.

Susan was appointed as alternate community member of the Youth Parole Board on 14 May 2024.



Alternate Community Member, Carmel Guerra OAM

Carmel Guerra OAM is the founder and chief executive officer of the Centre for Multicultural Youth, which is both the first and largest organisation in Australia to work exclusively with migrant and refugee young people. Carmel is widely recognised for her knowledge of multicultural issues and her involvement in youth justice and policing issues. Over a career spanning 30 years, Carmel has been a committed agent for social change and policy reform, with her work resulting in the development of a national support system for multicultural young people and families who seek to build a life in Australia. Carmel has been recognised as a leading voice on multicultural youth issues nationally and is chairperson of the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network, the national peak body for multicultural youth issues. Carmel was awarded the Victorian Premier's Award for Community

Harmony in 2015, a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2016 and an Honorary Doctorate by Deakin University in 2022.

Carmel was appointed as an alternate community member of the Youth Parole Board in 2012 and completed her final term on 17 May 2024 after 14 years of service.



Alternate Community Member, Aunty Marion Hansen

Aunty Marion Hansen is a Gamilaroi woman from Moree, New South Wales. Marion moved to Victoria in the early 1970s and has worked in Aboriginal community organisations for more than 40 years. In the early 1990s Marion was elected to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), where she served 4 terms, including 2 as Victorian Commissioner. As Commissioner, Aunty Marion was a signatory to the first Aboriginal Justice Agreement, the landmark agreement that established a partnership between Aboriginal communities and the Victorian Government, and the Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee (RAJAC) and Aboriginal Justice Caucus. Aunty Marion remains chair of the Southern RAJAC and co-chair of Caucus. Between her roles as Commissioner of ATSIC and co-chair of Caucus, Aunty Marion was influential in establishing Djirra, formerly

known as the Family Violence Prevention Legal Service, Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation, a residential rehabilitation service for Aboriginal people, Winja Ulupna Women's Recovery Centre, and Aboriginal radio station Kool'N'Deadly. Aunty Marion has also been a member of Dandenong and District Aborigines Cooperative for more than 40 years. She is a highly regarded Elder, passionate solutions seeker and powerful conduit between the Victorian Government, the non-government sector and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. Consequently, she was added to the Victorian Government Aboriginal Honour Roll in 2022.

Aunty Marion was appointed as an alternate community member of the Youth Parole Board on 1 June 2019.



Department Member, Chuol Puot

Chuol Puot is currently leading the development of Youth Justice's first multicultural strategy for the Department of Justice and Community Safety. Prior to this, he has held roles at the department as a youth justice community engagement officer, a youth justice senior practice advisor and a Children's Court youth diversion coordinator. Chuol holds a Master of Criminology, a Bachelor of Arts (Criminology) and a Bachelor of Social Work. Chuol was appointed to the Victorian Government's Anti-Racism Taskforce and has received the Victorian Police Community Exemplary Award for Multicultural Excellence and the Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne Scholarship. Chuol is currently pursuing a PhD with a project titled 'Key Factors Influencing High-Harm Offending and Deviant Peer Affiliation among African Australian and Pasifika Youth in Melbourne', with the

goal of informing more effective interventions in the criminal justice system.

Chuol was appointed as department member of the Youth Parole Board on 30 June 2022.



Alternate Department Member, Michelle Wood

Michelle Wood is the Executive Director, West Area, Department of Justice and Community Safety. As a law graduate Michelle began her career working as a community corrections officer. From there she held a range of senior management roles in Corrections Victoria where she led significant improvements across the adult corrections system. Michelle was the project director for the Community Correctional Services Sentencing Reform, which resulted in a significant expansion of community corrections officers, the introduction of a new intensive case management model and a regionalised community work framework and expanded the range of programs that address offending behaviour. In her current role, Michelle is responsible for delivering integrated justice services in the Grampians and Barwon South West regions, which includes

community youth justice services. Michelle currently leads and participates in a range of processes across government and within the service sector to address the needs of complex and vulnerable young people and adults who are involved in the justice system.

Michelle was appointed as an alternate department member of the Youth Parole Board on 18 May 2021.

General manager's report

Operational highlights

In 2023–24 the Youth Parole Board Secretariat facilitated the Youth Parole Board's operations by coordinating 32 meetings and supporting the Board to consider 721 matters.

From those matters, the Board issued 43 new parole orders, a reduction of 39% from the 70 parole orders issued in 2022–23. The number of parole orders issued by the Board has decreased since 2017–18, correlating with an overall reduction in the number of sentenced young people in youth justice, either in custody or on parole, over this time. This year was an exception to this, with a 32% increase in youth justice centre orders (YJCOs) issued by courts and a 29% increase in the number of individual young people subject to YJCOs.²

The increase in individual young people subject to YJCOs in 2023–24 contrasts the continued decline in the number of individual young people subject to community-based orders and the overall number of young people subject to all statutory orders.

The Secretariat supports the Board to closely monitor and quickly respond to offending risks and non-compliance by young people on parole. During the year the Board conducted 13 formal warnings and cancelled 16 parole orders, noting that these orders may have been issued during 2023–24 or in previous financial years.

In recognition of the breadth and depth of complex needs of young people supervised on parole, the Board conducted 5 professional consultations, providing Youth Justice and care teams with expert input to overcome case planning barriers and effectively deliver services to young people. In addition, the Board conducted 12 interviews with young people where problem-solving discussions were required to address changes in parole planning or progress.



Youth justice workers at Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct

The Secretariat is dedicated to supporting the Board's operations and its effectiveness in influencing young peoples' decisions and opportunities, for the benefit of the Victorian community.

² Note individual young people may have received more than one YJCO during the reporting period. Young people on YJCOs may be in custody or supervised on parole in the community.

The Youth Parole Board Secretariat

The Secretariat provides administrative, practice, policy and operational support to the Board with a high level of professionalism. The Secretariat contributes to high-quality and effective decision making by the Board by ensuring deliberations are of the highest quality and its operations are responsive, effective, and compliant with legislation. Board deliberations are informed by accurate, comprehensive, and timely information about young people under its jurisdiction. The Secretariat effectively conveys advice and direction from the Board to Youth Justice and key service system partners effectively.

The general manager is responsible for the operational, policy and practice direction of the Secretariat. The Secretary is the conduit between the Board and Youth Justice, external stakeholders and the community. The administration team processes decisions and undertakes complex record keeping, with all end-to-end processes to support the Board layered with multiple audits and checks, ensuring accuracy.



The Youth Parole Board Secretariat team L – R: Greta Ryan, Alana Mondre, Lucy Maule and Alyssa Fava (not pictured: Mishell Warner and Alyssa Moore).

Continuous improvement to support Youth Parole Board operations

The Secretariat is committed to continuous improvement in support of the Board's operations. In 2023–24 the team provided an intensive level of oversight of the quality of information provided to and from the Board. The Secretariat delivered targeted refresher training to Youth Justice teams and service system stakeholders, issued 4 new Practice Bulletins and implemented regular post-meeting feedback sessions to Youth Justice. Meeting processes, paperwork and reading materials were refreshed, including a new template to clearly capture Board considerations regarding victims' issues. The team explored and advised on a number of areas of interest to the Board such as monitoring reasons for parole deferrals, analysing emerging issues and trends, and providing timely updates about any changes in policy, practice or service system responses to the cohort of young people appearing before the Board.

Professional development

The Secretariat coordinates regular professional development seminars to enhance Board members' continuous learning about emerging issues, trends and practice approaches for young people, and to promote consistency in decision making. During 2023–24 the Board's capabilities were enhanced by the following presentations from experts and key stakeholders:

- *Youth Justice operational briefings (quarterly)* – by the Commissioner of Youth Justice Andrea Davidson, Deputy Secretary Jodi Henderson and Youth Justice executives across custody and community operations
- *Warnings that make a difference* – SALTIE consultancy
- *Our Youth Our Way report* – Kate Chapman, Commission for Children and Young People
- *Briefing on recorded crime statistics for the Youth Parole Board: year ending 2023* – Dr Fiona Dowsley, Chief Statistician and Executive Director, Data and Performance, at the Department of Justice and Community Safety

- *Understanding vicarious trauma* – Dr Melanie Millstead, Chief Psychology Officer, Department of Justice and Community Safety
- *Multisystemic therapy and functional family therapy* – department program managers and OzChild
- *Risk Assessment and Management Panels* – Jacky Tucker, Statewide Coordinator, Domestic Violence Victoria
- *The Independent Visitors Program* – Chris Galea and Tobi Yusuf, Commission for Children and Young People
- *Updates to primary health provision in youth justice precincts* – Dr Kyra Low, Clinical Director for Children and Youth, Justice Health
- *Inhouse clinical model to deliver youth justice rehabilitation programs* – Dr Chelsea Leach, Senior Manager, Rehabilitation and Outcomes, Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct.

On 6 June 2024 the annual Youth Parole Board Policy Day was held at Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct. Board members participated in a tour by Precinct Director Sarah Devine and Youth Justice Commissioner Andrea Davidson. Dr Stephane Shepherd (alternate community member) facilitated a panel in the afternoon on Youth Justice and African-Australian populations:

Trends, challenges and strengths-based solutions. The Board heard from Dr Shepherd, Research Fellow Dr Mohammed M Ali and Associate Research Fellow Abraham Kuol. The highlight of the day was hearing from a panel of 3 young adults who relayed their expertise having lived experience of the justice system. This included reflections and insights about what assisted them to successfully complete parole and transition to adulthood, where they are all realising their life goals and aspirations.

The Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne Lectures

The Secretariat team supported the Board to host 2 Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne Lectures during 2023–24. This important lecture series in the Youth Parole Board calendar was established in memory of Dr Larry Osborne, who died in 2011 while serving as a member of the Youth Parole Board. Dr Osborne was a general practitioner with a special interest in youth drug and alcohol and mental health treatment. He was dedicated to innovation and best practice in parole planning and supervision. The lectures celebrate and inspire the youth justice workforce, who share in Dr Osborne's commitment and travel from offices across Victoria to attend at the Melbourne Zoo.



L–R: Dr Mohammed Ali, Dr Stephane Shepherd, Dr Jordan Gibbs and Abraham Kuol at the Youth Parole Board Larry Osborne Lecture 2023

**Healing In Justice:
Stories, journeys and dreams
Dr Jordan Gibbs – 31 October 2023**

Dr Gibbs delivered a powerful presentation to the youth justice workforce. Dr Gibbs is a proud Peerapper and Anglo-Celtic man who is currently undertaking his Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology) at Swinburne University of Technology and has worked in First Nations health research for many years. Dr Gibbs' lecture focused on culturally safe practice approaches to support young peoples' recovery from complex trauma in a way that honours the individual's story and empowers them to take charge of their life. Alternate chairperson Judge Johns addressed the audience, recognising the important work of Youth Justice and the Aboriginal Youth Justice Program in supporting the needs of Aboriginal young people before the Board. The audience also enjoyed a reflective musical performance by the artist Allara.

**Risk, Needs and Responsivity:
Are we getting it right?
Professor Keith Cruise – 19 April 2024**

Professor Keith Cruise is a professor at Fordham University in the Department of Psychology and the co-director of the Centre for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice. Dr Cruise's lecture furthered the workforce's understanding of how case management in youth justice, underpinned by the Risk, Needs and Responsivity Model, is also contingent on understanding a young person's trauma needs. Chairperson Judge Quin addressed the audience by reflecting on the strength of Youth Justice's case practice, particularly in supporting young people with complex trauma histories. The audience also enjoyed a highly entertaining and joyful performance by Collateral Culture, allowing particular reflection on young people with Pasifika backgrounds.



L-R: Dr Stephane Shepherd, Professor Keith Cruise, Andrea Davidson (Youth Justice Commissioner) and Chuol Puot at the Youth Parole Board Larry Osborne Lecture 2024

Visitors

The Board welcomes visitors with a special interest in youth justice to its meetings. The Board requires all approved visitors to adhere to confidentiality and privacy provisions of Board proceedings. In 2023–24 observers to the Board have included volunteers from the Independent Visitor Program, Commission for Children and Young People; members of the South Sudanese Australian Youth Justice Expert Working Group, Department of Justice and Community Safety; members of the Aboriginal Youth Justice Team; and associates of Board chairpersons.

Recognising Carmel Guerra OAM

I would like to particularly acknowledge Carmel Guerra OAM. In May 2024 Carmel completed her final term as alternate community member after nearly 14 years of service to the Board. Carmel's impact on outcomes for young people before the Board from CALD backgrounds over such a significant period is immeasurable. Carmel's wealth of knowledge, experience and connection to the community service system provided incredible value to Board deliberations, and the Secretariat really enjoyed her company. We wish her all the best as she continues many avenues of important work with young people, particularly through her leadership of the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

Further acknowledgement

I wish to thank Judge Scott Johns, who completed his term as alternate chairperson in April 2024. Judge Johns played an instrumental role in maintaining the functions of the Board during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given Judge Johns' role leading the County Koori Court, his specialist knowledge about justice system responses to Aboriginal young people before the Board has been invaluable.

I welcome new members who joined the Board during 2023–24 including alternate chairperson His Honour Judge David Sexton and Susan Hancox as alternate community member. Both Judge Sexton and Susan have brought unique skill sets to the Board, maintaining the diversity of perspectives and breadth of expertise required for quality decision making. The Secretariat has thoroughly enjoyed working with our newest members and looks forward to future work in 2024–25 with Her Honour Judge Kellie Blair, who was appointed as an alternate chairperson in July 2024.

The Secretariat team values the Board's warm and supportive culture under Judge Quin's leadership and also enjoys working alongside our youth justice colleagues. We have a unique view of the commitment and hard work undertaken by many stakeholders in the youth justice system. The Secretariat is dedicated to supporting the Board's operations and its effectiveness in influencing young peoples' decisions and opportunities, for the benefit of the Victorian community.



Lucy Maule

Acting General Manager
Youth Parole Board Secretariat

Youth Parole Board overview

The Victorian Youth Parole Board was first established in 1961 by the *Social Welfare Act 1960* and now operates under section 442 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (the CYF Act). The Board is made up of a chairperson, who is a judge of the County Court, a nominee who acts on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Justice and Community Safety and 2 community members. Each of the 4 members may have an alternate member sit in their absence, and the chair can have 2 alternates, bringing the total number of Board members to 9. As a matter of policy, one community member is an Aboriginal person.

While the Board is a statutory body and its independence is important, the Board does not and cannot operate in isolation. The Board plays an integral role in the broader youth justice system and seeks to operate in a way that promotes collaboration and the cohesiveness of the system. Further, the Board occupies a unique and privileged position that lends itself to being able to meaningfully inform and contribute to policy discussions about parole, including input over many years into the development of the *Youth Justice Act 2024*. On implementation, the Youth Justice Act will supersede the CYF Act as the operating legislation for the Board.

Jurisdiction of the Youth Parole Board

The Youth Parole Board exercises jurisdiction over all young people sentenced by any court to a period of detention in a youth justice centre. These sentences may occur as per sections 462 and 463 of the CYF Act or young people may be sentenced under what is commonly referred to as the Dual-Track system. In Victoria, section 32 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* provides that young people convicted of offences they committed between the ages of 18 and 20 years can be detained in a youth justice centre instead of an adult prison. This is available in circumstances where the court assesses that the young person has reasonable prospects for rehabilitation or is particularly impressionable, immature or likely to be subjected to undesirable influences in the adult system.

The Board also exercises jurisdiction over all young people transferred by the Adult Parole Board from adult prison to serve their sentence in a youth justice centre under section 471 of the CYF Act.

Table 1: Number of youth residential and justice centre orders issued, by sentencing court and financial year

Year	Children's Court youth residential centre order	Children's Court youth justice centre order	Magistrates' and higher courts youth justice centre order	Total
2014–15	20	193	259	472
2015–16	18	308	243	569
2016–17	9	340	200	549
2017–18	22	405	213	640
2018–19	15	295	114	424
2019–20	5	197	76	278
2020–21	3	183	66	252
2021–22	2	123	33	158
2022–23	3	58	38	99
2023–24	0	85	46	131

Operations and decision making

Youth Parole Board sittings and functions

The Board has 2 scheduled sittings per month and convenes ad hoc meetings where required. In 2023–24 Board meetings were held at Parkville Youth Justice Precinct.³ Types of matters considered by the Board include:

- a young person’s progress in custody
- updates on parole planning
- professional consultations with care teams to overcome blockages in parole planning
- releasing a young person on parole
- a young person’s progress on parole in the community
- variations to parole orders
- requests to see young people where there are changes to their parole conditions
- delivering formal warnings to young people to address behaviour (in custody) or compliance (in the community)
- cancelling a young person’s parole
- reviewing a young person’s reset plan following a breach of parole
- planning for young people beyond the expiry of their parole orders
- applications to transfer young people to adult prison.

In 2023–24 the Board considered 721 matters during 24 scheduled and 8 in-person ad hoc meetings.

Youth Parole Board decision making

The Board makes decisions within a framework that focuses on the long-term protection of the community through the rehabilitation of young people. Decisions are informed by a range of factors and sources of information including:

- interviews with young people, their families and care teams
- the age and maturity of the young person
- the nature and circumstances of the young person’s offending behaviour, including Victoria Police summaries
- information contained in sentencing remarks from higher courts
- the young person’s criminal history
- the young person’s compliance with any previous community-based dispositions
- the nature of any outstanding charges and the potential outcome of pending court appearances
- the outcome of validated risk assessments tools
- the young person’s behaviour in custody
- the capacity for parole to assist the young person’s rehabilitation
- the availability of appropriate and stable accommodation
- the young person’s demonstrated willingness to participate in appropriate rehabilitation and treatment programs including education, training, employment, offence-specific programs, alcohol and other drug programs and mental health services
- reports from psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers, medical practitioners and other professionals
- submissions made by victims, police informants, the young person, the young person’s family/ caregivers, support persons, potential employers and cultural representatives.

The Board’s decision making accounts for the degree that a young person’s risk of reoffending can be reduced through the intensive level of supervision and support provided by Youth Justice, in partnership with families and the care team.

³ Note that the first Youth Parole Board meeting at the Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct occurred on 5 August 2024.



The Board structures parole orders to minimise trauma and enable recovery for victims, including by imposing special conditions.

The purpose of youth parole

The purpose of youth parole is to promote public safety by supervising and supporting the transition of young people from custody back into the community in a way that minimises the risk of reoffending in both frequency and seriousness.

Youth parole allows young people on a YJCO (15–20 year olds) or youth residential centre order (10–14 year olds) to serve part of their custodial sentence in the community. The Board is empowered to release or grant parole to young people subject to its jurisdiction (s 458).

Parole planning

Parole is an integral part of a young person's rehabilitation journey. It affords young people sentenced to custody the opportunity to spend the final portion of their sentence in the community, with statutory oversight and regular reporting to the Board provided by Youth Justice. The parole planning process begins as soon as a young person receives their custodial sentence. The Board closely monitors young people's behaviour and

participation in evidence-based rehabilitation programs within custody, as these factors indicate reduced reoffending risk and indicate a readiness for parole. The Board holds young people to account for participating in the parole planning process, with the support of Youth Justice.

Parole planning is informed by the Youth Justice Case Management Framework, which provides a structured and evidence-based process for assessment, planning, intervention and review of the young person's case plan. Parole planning is led by Youth Justice case managers in collaboration with the young person and the young person's care team. The care team includes the young person, family/caregivers/significant others, statutory and non-statutory agencies and specialist clinicians.

Together, based on expert advice, they formulate a Parole Plan for the young person's release into the community that is tendered to the Board for consideration.



Youth Justice professionals in the Youth Parole Board sitting room at Parkville Youth Justice Precinct

The Parole Plan outlines interventions that respond to the results of validated assessment tools. These tools identify the young person's general and offence-specific risk of reoffending, as well as their individual risks, needs and responsivity factors. This may include the likelihood of an intellectual disability, suicide or self-harm, assessment and management of family violence risk, or a physical or mental health condition. The Parole Plan also identifies the young person's strengths that are likely to support a successful period of parole, such as strong family supports.

The Parole Plan provides the Board with the details of the recommended programs and services in a young person's case plan and any special conditions on their parole order, including relating to victims. Collectively, this information provides the Board with an informed assessment of the young person's readiness and suitability for release into the community on parole.

Parole orders issued by the Board

When a young person is being considered for parole, the Board interviews Youth Justice case managers and other members of the young person's care team. The care team is responsible for effectively delivering services to address offending risks and supporting the young person in the community.

The Board also interviews the young person and their family/caregivers. This often includes revisiting sentencing remarks, discussing the gravity of their offence and victim impacts. Importantly, the Board also discusses the young person's understanding of the expectations of parole and their commitment to their parole plan. The young person is questioned by the Board about any concerns or anticipated challenges and about any predetermined strategies that the young person has committed to in order to manage stressors and triggers for reoffending. The young person is also asked about their future aspirations. If the Board decides to parole the young person, they will explain the conditions of the young person's parole and the expectations for community supervision and reporting on their progress. The young person then signs their parole order, indicating they have consented to and understand the conditions of parole. They are then released.

The Board issued 43 parole orders in 2023–24. The majority of parole orders are issued to young men, which is reflective of the gender breakdown of the sentenced population in youth justice centres. Note that a small number of young people may be issued more than one parole order in a financial year (Table 2).

Table 2: Parole orders issued by the Youth Parole Board, by gender and financial year

Year	Parole orders issued		Annual total
	Males	Females	
2012–13	213	14	227
2013–14	184	6	190
2014–15	177	15	192
2015–16	182	11	193
2016–17	192	9	201
2017–18	227	16	243
2018–19	171	14	185
2019–20	149	11	160
2020–21	129	5	134
2021–22	84	3	87
2022–23	64	6	70
2023–24	41	2	43

Conditions of parole

Mandatory parole conditions

Under the CYF Act (s 458 (4)), the Board is required to impose the following parole conditions on orders for all young people on parole:

- the person must not break the law;
- the person must be supervised by a parole officer;
- the person must obey any lawful instructions of that parole officer;
- the person must report as and when directed by that parole officer;
- the person may be interviewed by that parole officer at any reasonable time and place directed by that parole officer;
- the person must, within two days of changing his or her address, advise that parole officer of the change of address;
- the person must not leave Victoria without the written permission of the Youth Parole Board.

Special parole conditions

For young people who have committed serious offences, the Board is required under the CYF Act (s 458A (3)), to impose the above mandatory conditions *and* the following additional special conditions on their youth parole order:

- any condition the Youth Parole Board considers necessary for the protection of any victim of a serious offence; and
- in regard to the circumstances of a serious offence, one or more of the following:
 - that the person not visit particular places or areas, or only visit the places or areas at specified times;
 - that the person not contact specified persons or classes of person;
 - that the person undergo rehabilitation and treatment ordered by the Youth Parole Board;
 - that the person attend a day program specified by the Youth Parole Board.

A Youth Justice community case manager may recommend special conditions to include on a young person's parole order. The intention of special conditions is that they target specific needs, risks and responsivity factors (such as drug and alcohol use) to reduce the risk of reoffending, or where problems are likely to interfere with the young person successfully completing the parole order. Special conditions are informed by the young person's offending history, any victim issues resulting from the offending, and other specialist reports.

Of the 43 parole orders issued in 2023–24, the Board imposed 156 special conditions as outlined below in (Table 3).



Collateral Culture performing at the April 2024 Youth Parole Board Larry Osborne Lecture

Table 3: Special conditions imposed by the Youth Parole Board, 2023–24

Condition	Meaning	Number
Abide by a curfew	The young person must remain at a specified address for set hours each night to prevent their exposure to or engagement in risk-taking activities and offending behaviour	19
Abide by conditions of intervention order	The young person must comply with any active intervention orders for which they are named as the respondent	4
Attend a day program	The young person must attend an education, training, employment support or volunteer program, or participate in paid employment	8
Attend offence-specific assessments and interventions	The young person must be assessed for offence-specific programs and, if found suitable, attend and participate in individual or group sessions with a clinician. These interventions are directly related to the young person's offending behaviour and include programs that specifically address violence, motor vehicle offending, alcohol and other drug use or sexual offending	31
Substance use counselling	To support the young person to address substance abuse factors that may impact their capacity to successfully complete their parole order	23
Mental health counselling	To support the young person to improve their mental health in order to successfully complete their parole order	3
No contact with a co-offender	The young person is to have no direct or indirect contact with their co-offender, including through friends, text messages and social media	18
No contact with a victim	This condition is imposed to mitigate the potential for a victim, or in some cases a member of the victim's family, to be retraumatized by contact with the young person ⁴	18
Not to attend a geographical location	The young person is prohibited from attending a particular area or premises, where they may have deliberate or unintentional contact with the victim of the offences	18
Not to be in possession of a firearm/weapon	This condition is imposed where the young person has a history of offending with a weapon and it is assessed that a special condition is necessary to prevent engagement in high-impact violent offending	1
Other	Other conditions as appropriate to mitigate specific risks	4
Reside as directed	The young person must live at an address specified on their parole order and must not change address without prior agreement from their case manager	9
Total		156

⁴ Note the language describing this type of condition has been updated to more accurately reflect wording on parole orders. The intent and meaning behind this type of condition remains the same as reported in previous years.

Victim conditions and register

The Board recognises the impact that a young person's offending has on their victim and the community. When considering the conditions of a young person's release, the Board weighs the potential trauma for the victim, and understands that this trauma can be pervasive and debilitating. The Board structures parole orders to minimise trauma and enable recovery for victims, including by imposing special conditions.

In 2023–24 there were 36 conditions to address victims' issues, via non-associations with co-offenders, geographical restrictions and explicit instructions to not contact individual victims or their families.


To inform special conditions, the Board seeks information from the Youth Justice and Victoria Police about:

- the young person's prior knowledge of or relationship with the victim
- the factors that motivated the young person's offending
- the young person's current attitude towards the victim and/or victim's family
- the likelihood of further deliberate or unintentional contact with the victim or their family, such as through associates or through frequenting the same areas
- the young person's need to live in or access supports near the location of the offence or areas frequented by the victim
- the young person's history of committing offences in a particular area
- the receptiveness of the victim to further contact with the young person, such as through mediated restorative discussions or familial or intimate relationships with the young person
- current or prior intervention orders
- the victim's need to be protected from further contact
- the capacity for special conditions to prevent further harm to the victim.

There are occasions when the victims or families of victims request to meet with or communicate with the Board directly. The Board supports meetings with victims and their families and endeavours where possible to hear their submissions. The Board responds to all individual victim's requests with a considered and sensitive approach, on a case-by-case basis.

Based on one or all of these factors, a young person who is considered eligible for parole may be listed on the Youth Parole Board Victim Condition Register. The Secretariat team maintain a register of young people who are eligible for parole or are on parole in the community, and where special conditions are required to protect the victim of the young person's offending. This Victim Condition register lists the details of the young person's offending, information from Victoria Police informants and Youth Justice and submissions from victims and their families. These special conditions, imposed by the Board, are tailored to the individual circumstances of the offence and to protecting victims.

During interviews with the Board, members will revisit the impact of a young person's offending on victims, including reference to sentencing remarks or any other material regarding victim impacts. This is intended to ensure the young person understands the importance of complying with victims' special conditions prior to release. Compliance with these special conditions is monitored by Youth Justice case managers who report regularly to the Board. The case managers provide oversight for all issues relating to victims throughout the parole order including the special conditions that protect victims from inadvertent or deliberate contact and from further harm when young people return to the community.



The purpose of youth parole is to promote public safety by supervising and supporting the transition of young people from custody back into the community, in a way that minimises the risk of reoffending.

Active parole supervision

As young people on parole are serving their YJCO in the community, they must formally undertake to comply with the conditions of their parole order. Youth Justice community-based case managers (akin to parole officers) work in teams across Victoria and are authorised under section 453 of the CYF Act to provide statutory supervision to young people on parole. Youth Justice case managers report through line management to the Secretary of the Department of Justice and Community Safety and are subject to the direction of the Board (also under s 453 of the CYF Act).

Youth Justice case managers support and supervise young people from the commencement of their sentence in custody, working alongside custodial unit staff and assessment and coordination staff to oversee their wellbeing in detention. As discussed earlier, a considerable amount of time and effort is put into preparing young people for their transition to the community, and significant barriers are often overcome for young people who have high support needs – for example, in securing appropriate accommodation and education or employment.

Youth Justice case managers are guided by the Youth Justice Case Management Framework. They oversee referrals and treatment by a range of services and lead care teams by coordinating effective service delivery to young people and their families. This will always include oversight for a young person's engagement in youth offending programs that provide tailored interventions, determined using validated assessment tools that target criminogenic needs. Youth Justice case managers may also call on the Youth Justice High Risk Panel for input to address a young person's acute needs and risks. Local Multi-Agency Panels also provide coordinated, cross-service system accountability to address gaps in service delivery for young people in the community.

Youth Justice case managers undertake regular supervision with young people throughout their sentence. They are highly skilled at building rapport with young people, demonstrating prosocial adult role modelling and undertaking structured evidence-based activities to motivate positive change. They also challenge any offending

behaviours. During supervision, case managers explore and monitor the dynamic risks and needs of young people as they progress through their parole order.

Youth Justice case managers are highly agile and respond swiftly to changes in a young person's circumstances, risks or needs. This may include revising approaches to improve a young person's engagement such as by providing outreach support, considering additional referrals to services or strengthening relationships with families.

Youth Justice may also issue formal directions or warnings, or may request for the Board to cancel a young person's parole. The Board may request for the young person to appear before the Board during their parole period to discuss emerging issues, warn them about inadequate compliance, or to acknowledge and reinforce positive progress.



Department Board member Michelle Wood at the 2024 Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne Lecture

Warnings issued by the Board

Warnings can be initiated by the Board or Youth Justice and can address the young person's compliance or behavioural issues when they are in custody or in the community. Warnings provide the young person with the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and to commit to changes that will result in either a successful release on parole or completion of their parole order. In the warning interview, the Board provides the young person with the opportunity to explain the reasons for their behaviour before communicating expectations for improvements and likely consequences should the young person fail to take the opportunity for change. For young people in custody, consequences for unacceptable behaviour may include deferral of parole or, in very rare instances, transfer to adult prison.

For young people on parole in the community, the Board may amend or vary the young person's parole conditions to increase supervision, or to cancel a parole order and return the young person to youth justice custody. The Board always encourages the young person to access the support of their care team and significant others to make any necessary changes required. In 2023–24 the number of warnings issued by the Board was consistent with the previous year, in proportion to the number of young people subject to YJCOs and the number of parole orders issued (Table 4). This demonstrates the Board's close monitoring of young people and its responsiveness to emerging issues relating to behaviour or non-compliance.

Table 4: Warnings issued by the Youth Parole Board by financial year

Year	Warnings issued by the Board
2014–15	14
2015–16	17
2016–17	23
2017–18	29
2018–19	22
2019–20	40
2020–21	41
2021–22	33
2022–23	19
2023–24	13



Judge Scott Johns addresses the audience at the 2023 Youth Parole Board Dr Larry Osborne Lecture

Parole Cancellations by the Board

The Board may cancel a young person’s parole order at any time (as per s 460 of the CYF Act). The key consideration for the Board in deciding whether to cancel a young person’s parole order is the safety and protection of the community. Accordingly, the Board will cancel parole if the risks of the young person remaining in the community outweigh the benefits of the young person continuing on parole.

Parole cancellation can occur if a young person is sentenced to a term of detention for more than 3 months for an offence committed during the parole period, or due to a young person’s failure to observe their parole conditions. For example, a young person may fail to report to their case manager, reside as directed, comply with parole special conditions, or engage with programs and services designed to address offending risk in the community. The Board considers non-compliance to be a serious matter.

The cancellation of a parole order triggers a warrant for the young person’s arrest. The young

person is then returned to youth justice custody to serve the unexpired portion of their original sentence. In some cases, the Board may credit a young person with a period of time served in the community, where there is clearly demonstrated compliance with their parole plan and order conditions. To be credited for time served, the young person must have demonstrated an effort to comply with the conditions of their release. The Board will consider this alongside the nature and circumstances of the breach of parole. If the Board considers it appropriate, it can again release a young person on parole after his or her parole has been cancelled.

In 2023–24 the Board cancelled 16 parole orders. Two of these cancellations were for reconviction and 14 for failure to comply with the conditions of parole. The number of individual young people cancelled was 14, noting that 2 young people had their parole orders cancelled twice within the reporting period (Table 5).

Table 5: Parole cancellations by the Youth Parole Board, by reason and financial year

Year	Number of parole cancellations		Total
	Reconviction ⁵	Failing to comply with conditions	
2014–15	22	49	71
2015–16	34	51	85
2016–17	28	66	94
2017–18	27	85	112
2018–19	18	75	93
2019–20	26	57	83
2020–21	16	65	81
2021–22	10	33	43
2022–23	4	26	30
2023–24	2	14	16

⁵ As per section 460 (4) of the CYF Act.

Transfers

Sections 464 to 477 of the CYF Act deal with the power of the Board and Adult Parole Board to transfer young people between jurisdictions. In rare circumstances, the Board may transfer a young person from a youth justice centre to imprisonment in an adult facility. This follows either an application by Youth Justice (under s 467 of the CYF Act) or an application made by a young person aged 16 years or older (under s 468 of the CYF Act).

Table 6 lists the transfers that occurred during 2023–24 by relevant provision of the CYF Act that enables the Board’s decisions.

Table 6: Number of transfers by the Youth Parole Board by transfer provision and financial year

Transfers by the Board	Year									
	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Youth residential centre to youth justice centre (ss 464 and 465)	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youth justice centre to prison (s 467)	2	1	4	7	1	3	6	7	1	0
Youth justice centre to prison – at young person’s request (s 468)	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	0
Youth justice centre to youth residential centre (s 470)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer back to prison after transfer from prison to youth justice centre (s 473)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Person in youth residential centre sentenced to detention in youth justice centre or imprisonment (s 474)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Person in youth justice centre sentenced to imprisonment (s 475)	7	12	12	11	14	12	10	3	10	3
Person in youth justice centre sentenced to detention in youth residential centre (s 476)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Person in prison sentenced to detention in youth justice centre (s 477)	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	2
Annual total	15	14	17	19	16	19	17	14	14	5

Young Offenders Transfer Review Group

The Youth Parole Board and the Sentence Management Division of Corrections Victoria have jointly established the Young Offenders Transfer Review Group to monitor and provide high-level oversight for the wellbeing of young people who have been, or will potentially be, transferred between a youth justice centre and prison. Representatives from the Commission for Children and Young People also regularly attend. The Young Offenders Transfer Review Group reviews the status of each young person until they complete their sentence or turn 21 years of age and are no longer eligible for return to a youth justice centre. This forum ensures both jurisdictions maintain contemporary knowledge about these young people to inform the most effective service system response.



The entrance to Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct, which began accommodating young people in August 2023

Statistical supplement

The following section provides supplementary statistics for the year ended 30 June 2024. All data, including parole data sourced from the Victorian youth justice system, undergoes routine data validation. As such, all data can be subject to minor changes over time. Numbers contained in this report may not be directly comparable to subsequently published reporting.

Please note Table 9 is included in this statistical supplement due to the persistent over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the youth justice system compared with their non-Aboriginal peers.

A survey was conducted of the Youth Justice records of 82 males and 3 females in custody on 3 June 2024 to gather qualitative and quantitative data and provide insight into the needs of young people who are in Youth Justice custody. Questions were consistent with the 2023 survey. The results of the 2024 survey are presented in Table 7. They demonstrate the disadvantage, trauma and complexity of young people in custody and provide Youth Justice with important information about the programs, services and supports required by these young people.

Table 7: Characteristics of young people in custody

Characteristics of young offenders	
Has never been subject to a child protection order	49%
Has been subject to a previous child protection order and has an open child protection case	12%
Was previously subject to a child protection order but does not have an open child protection case	24%
Currently has an open child protection case with no previous history of a child protection order	8%
Was a victim of abuse, trauma or neglect as a child	62%
Has experienced family violence	47%
Is accessing mental health support in relation to their diagnosed mental illness	54%
Has a history of self-harm, suicidal ideation or suicide attempts	36%
Has a active cognitive difficulty diagnosed or documented by a professional	25%
Has a history of use or misuse of alcohol	69%
Has a history of use or misuse of drugs (illicit or prescription)	80%
Has a history of use or misuse of alcohol and drugs (illicit or prescription)	62%
Has offended while under the influence of alcohol but not drugs (illicit or prescription)	8%
Has offended while under the influence of drugs (illicit or prescription) but not alcohol	20%
Has offended while under the influence of both alcohol and other drugs (illicit or prescription)	52%

Table 8: Court issued youth justice centre orders in 2023–24 by gender and admission type.

Sentencing court (youth justice centre order)	Gender	New admission	Already on a custodial sentence	Total number of YJCOs issued
Children's Court:	Male	56	23	79
	Female	1	1	2
Magistrates' Court	Male	8	4	12
	Female	0	0	0
County Court	Male	27	3	30
	Female	1	0	1
County Court of Appeals	Male	0	0	0
	Female	1	0	0
Supreme Court	Male	5	0	5
	Female	0	0	0
Subtotal	Male	98	30	128
	Female	2	1	3
Total		100	31	131

Note: There were no youth justice residential orders issued by any court during 2023–24.

Table 9: Number of youth justice centre orders issued in 2023–24, by sentencing jurisdiction and Aboriginal status

Type of order – sentencing court	Aboriginal young people	Non-Aboriginal young people	Total young people
Youth justice centre order – Children's Court	13	40	53
Youth justice centre order – higher courts	6	38	44
Total	19	78	97

Notes:

Some individual young people may have had a YJCO issued by both the Children's Court and a higher court, resulting in them being counted twice.

There were no youth residential centre orders issued in 2023–24.

Table 10: Youth parole – releases, cancellations, completions and snapshot, by financial year

Year	Releases on parole	Paroles cancelled	Paroles completed	Persons on parole at 30 June
2014–15	196	71	97	112
2015–16	193	85	93	94
2016–17	201	94	74	81
2017–18	243	112	120	95
2018–19	185	93	112	75
2019–20	160	83	78	80
2020–21	134	81	76	57
2021–22	87	43	49	42
2022–23	70	30	39	36
2023–24	43	16	37	21

Table 11: Parole orders issued and cancelled, by region, 2023–24

Region (Department of Justice and Community Safety)	Parole orders issued	Parole orders cancelled
North Metropolitan	3	2
West Metropolitan	17	7
South Metropolitan	10	2
East Metropolitan	3	2
Barwon South West	2	0
Gippsland	1	0
Grampians	2	1
Hume	5	2
Loddon Mallee	0	0
Total	43	16

Note: Some cancellations were for parole orders issued prior to the current reporting period.

Table 12: Parole cancellations by the Youth Parole Board, by sentencing jurisdiction and financial year

Year	Number of parole cancellations – jurisdiction		Total
	Children’s Court sentences	Magistrates’ Court and higher court sentences	
2014–15	38	33	71
2015–16	53	32	85
2016–17	49	45	94
2017–18	59	53	112
2018–19	58	35	93
2019–20	58	25	83
2020–21	47	34	81
2021–22	24	19	43
2022–23	8	22	30
2023–24	4	12	16

Note: Some cancellations were for parole orders issued prior to the current reporting period.

Table 13: Number of young people subject to Youth Justice supervision, by order type and financial year

Year	Type of order						Total
	Probation	Youth supervision	Youth attendance	Youth control	Youth residential centre	Youth justice centre	
2014–15	569	247	40	N/A	2	203	1,061
2015–16	473	249	31	N/A	7	251	1,012
2016–17	354	260	40	N/A	3	252	911
2017–18	370	245	38	N/A	11	297	961
2018–19	335	220	28	10	3	172	770
2019–20	241	198	29	2	1	141	612
2020–21	200	154	28	2	1	129	514
2021–22	170	119	35	3	1	105	433
2022–23	170	182	20	2	1	70	445
2023–24	139	93	14	1	0	90	337

Note: Youth control orders were first introduced in 2018–19.

Table 14: Episodes of remand, by age commenced in each financial year

Year	Remand episode 10 to 14 years	Remand episode 15 years +	Total
2014–15	225	687	912
2015–16	214	765	979
2016–17	193	876	1,069
2017–18	164	613	777
2018–19	181	765	946
2019–20	279	1045	1,324
2020–21	195	885	1,080
2021–22	116	622	738
2022–23	119	617	736
2023–24	69	474	543

Table 15: Individual young people subject to remand, by age and financial year

Year	Young people 10–14 years	Young people 15 years +	Total
2014–15	99	413	512
2015–16	83	41	484
2016–17	71	433	504
2017–18	68	392	460
2018–19	96	429	525
2019–20	113	473	586
2020–21	76	392	468
2021–22	52	311	363
2022–23	47	292	339
2023–24	33	230	263

