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**Chair’s Annual Report – Victoria Police Legacy (VPL) 2024 - 2025**

As we reflect on 2025, Victoria Police Legacy (VPL) continues to stand as a pillar of support for the families of our fallen and retired police officers. This year has been marked by significant milestones, including leadership transitions, new initiatives, and strengthened community engagement. We remain committed to our mission of ensuring that every police legatee feels supported, acknowledged, and valued.

2025 also marks VPL’s 45th year of operation, a milestone that reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Ambassadors, and partners over more than four decades. Together, we continue to build on the legacy of service, care, and compassion that defines this organisation.

It is with profound sadness that we acknowledge the loss of Detective Senior Constable Neal Thompson and Senior Constable Vadim de Waart, who tragically lost their lives in the line of duty on 26August 2025 in Porepunkah while executing a search warrant. We honour their courage, dedication, and ultimate sacrifice. Victoria Police Legacy is committed to ensuring that their contributions and sacrifice are never forgotten.

**Leadership Transition**

In January 2025, we welcomed Deb Robertson APM as our new Chief Executive Officer. Deb brings over 41 years of experience in Victoria Police and a distinguished career in leadership, strategic planning, and community engagement.

We also acknowledge the invaluable support of our outgoing Patron, Chief Commissioner Shane Paton, and Interim Chief Commissioner Rick Nugent, who continues to serve as an Ambassador. We warmly welcome Chief Commissioner Mike Bush and look forward to a strong and productive relationship on behalf of all police legatees.

**Our People**

**Legatee Support Overview**

VPL is proud to provide ongoing support to police families across Victoria. The following chart summarises the number of legatees we currently support with an overall increase of 6.45% in 2025:



**Patron-in-Chief**

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria.

**Patron**

Our Patron is Chief Commissioner Shane Patton APM - Victoria Police.

**Board**

*Elected Board members who have served*

Chair – Detective Inspector Kate O’Neill – (elected October 2023) appointed Chair October 2023

Vice Chair - Commander Mark Galliott APM– (elected October 2024) appointed Vice Chair October 2024

Assistant Commissioner Michael Grainer APM – elected October 2023

Superintendent Brad Dixon – elected October 2024- resigned September 2025

Inspector Dianne Thomson – elected October 2024 – resigned June 2025

Detective Senior Sergeant Benjamin Gordon – elected October 2023

Inspector Carla McIntyre  - elected October 2024

*Nominated Board members*

Superintendent Darren Bentley - Chief Commissioner’s nominee – appointed February 2024

Sergeant Karl David APM - President: The Police Association Victoria (TPAV) nominee – appointed October 2023

*Appointed Board members*

Anthony De Fazio (Non-member Director) – appointed October 2024

Senior Police Chaplain Rev. Jim Jung (Non-member Director) – appointed October 2024

*Board retirement/appointment*

CEO – Company Secretary – Lex de Man AFSM retired at 31 December 2024

CEO – Company Secretary – Debra Robertson APM appointed 1 January 2025

**Finance and Audit Committee**

Chair – Senior Sergeant Darren Kenos – retired November 2024

 Superintendent Brad Dixon – appointed November 2024

Members - Senior Police Chaplain Rev. Jim Jung
 Inspector Carla McIntyre

 CEO Lex de Man AFSM– retired December 2024
 CEO Debra Robertson APM– appointed January 2025

 Finance Manager Michelle More

 Non – member Director – Anthony De Fazio

 Community Member Orsino Yeung

 Community Member Therse Kenny – appointed May 2025

**Risk Committee**

Chair - Commander Mark Galliott APM

Members - Assistant Commissioner Michael Grainer APM

 Inspector Dianne Thomson

 Detective Senior Sergeant Benjamin Gordon

CEO Debra Robertson APM

 Operations Manager Kerry Wellington

 Community Member Mr. Andrew Simpson

**Board Meeting Attendance**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | October | November | December | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September |
| KO |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| DB |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| AdF | X | **** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| KD | X | X |  | X |  | X |  |  |  | X |  |
| BD |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| CMI | X | **** |  | **** |  | **** |  | **** |  | **** | **** |
| MG |  | **** |  | **** |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| BG |  | **** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| MGr |  | **** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |
| JJ |  | **** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| DT | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*KO = Kate O’Neill; DB = Darren Bentley; AdF = Anthony De Fazio; KD = Karl David; BD = Bradley Dixon; CMI = Carla McIntyre*

*MG = Mark Galliott; BG = Ben Gordon; MGr = Michael Grainger; JJ = Jim Jung; DT= Dianne Thomson*

*#Note – December, March, May, and July – No meetings held as the Board determined to meet 7 times*

*per calendar year.*

**Staffing Overview**

VPL’s staff remain central to the delivery of our programs and services. The following chart reflects the current staff structure:



**Strategic Achievements and Initiatives**

* **National Police Legacy Day:** Inaugural day uniting all eight Police Legacies across Australia, introducing the Michaelmas D**aisy** as a symbol of remembrance and hope.
* **Guiding Principles:** New Guiding Principles for all events implemented to ensure consistency and alignment.
* **New Strategic Plan for 2026 – 2030**
* **Constitution Review:** Comprehensive review underway to modernise the constitution and ensure it meets organisational needs.
* **Police Legacy Award:** The award for graduating recruits at the Academy has been renamed the Police Legacy Award, recognising leadership through care and compassion.
* **Volunteer Coordination:** New role established to support volunteer engagement and events, filled by Louise Forti, a retired Senior Sergeant who joined in July 2025.
* **Grants and Funding:** Grants reviewed to align financial outlay with community expectations; new grants aligned with the draft Strategic Plan 2026–2030 to be considered at the October Board meeting.
* **Partnerships:** Continued collaboration with the prior foundation to support middle management in Victoria Police and young police legatees.

**Community Engagement and Signature Events**

* Regional getaways and metropolitan programs foster engagement and support among legatees.
* Annual Christmas Appeal raised funds in partnership with BankVic to support children and families of police officers.
* Signature MCG event in November will celebrate and acknowledge police legatees.

**Acknowledgements**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to:

* Our Ambassadors and volunteers, whose dedication ensures the success of VPL programs and events.
* Our staff, for their commitment and tireless efforts.
* Our partners, whose support allows VPL to continue to deliver meaningful services to police legatees.

**Looking Forward**

As we move into 2026, VPL is ready to implement the **Strategic Plan 2026–2030**, focusing on delivering practical and financial assistance, supporting education and career development, facilitating skills-based and personal development activities, providing emotional and social support, and advocating for beneficiaries through referral to community and specialist services. We will continue to strengthen governance, enhance service delivery, and ensure that the legacy of those who have served is respectfully honoured and remembered.

**Kate O’Neill**
*Chair, Victoria Police Legacy*