

# Delivering Major Projects

**The Department of Justice provides state-of-the-art buildings and infrastructure for the delivery of modern justice services.**



*John Richardson (left) and Pat Smith (right) oversee the construction of the \$20 million Beechworth prison – part of a \$194 million program to improve Victoria's prisons.*

# Investing in infrastructure

## In 2003–2004, the Department managed a \$153 million construction and facilities program for police stations, courts and prisons and other justice facilities across Victoria.

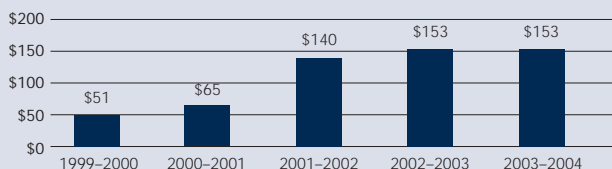
This program is designed to meet the growth in Victorian communities, upgrade facilities to meet contemporary requirements, replace out-of-date facilities and respond to the growth in Victoria's prison population.

The Department's program has been successfully implemented with projects delivered in accordance with the Government's financial policies, including the provision of the best outcomes in terms of value for money, public interests and client satisfaction.

New or upgraded buildings and capital investment increases access to justice services and improves the community's confidence in the legal and courts systems. Building better prisons supports the delivery of new rehabilitation and pre- and post-release initiatives, which, in turn, will help to reduce offending and re-offending rates and the proportion of ex-prisoners returning to prison.

Approximately \$150 million has been spent annually over the last three financial years in delivering buildings and other capital infrastructure, and it is anticipated that spending will remain at this level in the 2004–2005 financial year.

Capital expenditure budget 1999–2000 to 2003–2004 (\$ million)



A \$1.4 million upgrade of facilities at the Bendigo Law Courts has helped restore and maintain this heritage-listed building.

## Melbourne Legal Precinct Masterplan

2003–2004 saw work commence on the Melbourne Legal Precinct Masterplan. The plan will provide a set of options for capital works to improve the Legal Precinct with the aim of improving capacity to meet medium and long term demand for Court services in the Precinct. The Department has employed an architectural firm to assist in preparation of the options.

## Investing in courts

### Completed initiatives 2003–2004

#### Bendigo Law Courts

Work was completed on a \$1.4 million upgrade at the historic Bendigo Court in July 2003. The upgrade provides for heating and cooling of courtrooms, public waiting areas and administration offices and the relocation of a hearing room. Built in the 1890s, Bendigo Court is the largest and grandest court building outside Melbourne and is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register for its historical, architectural and aesthetic significance.

#### Horsham Court

The upgrade of Horsham Court has provided new jury amenities, a jury poolroom, two public interview rooms and improved air conditioning. The \$640,000 project was completed in August 2003.

## Continuing initiatives 2003–2004

### Warrnambool Court Complex

Construction on the \$15.5 million Warrnambool Court Complex continued throughout 2003–2004. After conducting extensive community consultation on building design, the complex will contain multi-jurisdictional courts with jury and custody facilities, a pre-trial hearing room, interview rooms and facilities for public and staff. The building will also accommodate the Office of the Public Prosecutions, Sheriff's Office, Community Correctional Services and the pilot Koori Court.

The facility will incorporate ecologically sustainable development principles, including energy efficient design and feature the latest in court technology. The project is due for completion in 2004–2005.

### Mildura Court Complex

Work continued on the new \$16.7 million Mildura Court Complex through 2003–2004. The complex will comprise multi-jurisdictional courts with jury and custody facilities as well as a pre-trial hearing room, interview rooms and facilities for public and staff. Community consultation sessions were held on the proposed design.

The building, incorporating ecologically sustainable development principles and energy efficient design, will also accommodate the Office of the Public Prosecutions, Sheriff's Office and Community Correctional Services. The project is due for completion in 2004–2005.

## Investing in police stations

The Department is delivering the biggest police station building program in the State's history – by the end of 2006, the Government will have built or upgraded 135 police stations at a total of \$280 million.

The Department works closely with Victoria Police in the strategic planning and development of new police stations, providing over-arching policy advice, coordination and monitoring of investments.

Opportunities for police to co-locate with courts and/or emergency services are strongly monitored by the Department, consistent with the principles of joined-up Government. Wider policy initiatives, such as Melbourne 2030, growth corridors and local council priorities, are also influencing factors and are taken into account by Victoria Police in their Strategic Facilities Development Plan, which has been the basis of the Government's investment.



The \$6.44 million Northcote Police Station is part of the State Government's \$280 million program to improve and upgrade police stations across Victoria to house a record number of police.

In 2003–2004, the building or upgrading of 20 police stations was completed.

Station	Cost (million)
Beaufort	\$0.5
Bellarine (Ocean Grove)	\$5.0
Bunyip	\$0.65
Camberwell	\$0.93
Croydon	\$5.11
Diamond Creek	\$6.37
Gisborne	\$4.81
Gordon	\$0.25
Heidelberg	\$8.43
Inglewood	\$0.63
Kilmore	\$3.98
Macarthur	\$0.27
Maryborough	\$4.85
Northcote	\$6.44
Preston	\$6.72
Pyramid Hill	\$0.32
Richmond	\$8.18
Seymour	\$7.44
Whitfield	\$0.25
Yea	\$0.55
Total	\$71.68

A further 13 police station projects were commenced during 2003–2004 and will become operational during 2004–2005.

Station	Cost (million)
Bendoc	\$0.30
Bannockburn	\$0.64
Cressy	\$0.28
Edenhope	\$0.64
Endeavour Hills	\$4.42
Merbein	\$0.63
Myrtleford	\$0.82
Nyah	\$0.89
Robinvale	\$0.92
Rowville	\$4.5
Smythesdale	\$0.28
Swifts Creek	\$0.53
Tarnagulla	\$0.55
Total	\$15.4

# Investing in infrastructure continued

## Improving prisons

### Redeveloping Victoria's prison infrastructure

Victoria's prison infrastructure is undergoing a major redevelopment, and is on track to deliver a total of 1,073 new permanent beds by late 2005. The program includes building three new facilities – a 600-bed maximum security remand prison at Ravenhall, a 300-bed medium security correctional programs centre near Geelong, a 120-bed minimum security open prison near Beechworth and new accommodation units at the existing Langi Kal Kal and Ararat Prisons.

A \$194 million correctional building program began in 2001 and is the largest ever undertaken in Victoria. The program aims to deliver quality facilities that contribute to a system better able to meet new challenges, the changing prisoner profile, and support the delivery of new rehabilitation and pre- and post-release initiatives.

A Building Design Review Project established the cell design guidelines and fire safety for all new maximum and medium security prisons. These have been consolidated into one set of comprehensive guidelines.

In 2003–2004, a risk assessment audit was conducted as part of this project on all operational prisons within the maximum and medium security classification. The aim was to identify obvious risks, such as hanging points within the cellular accommodation facilities and fire safety issues. This assessment has prioritised works in maximum security units and these works are on track.

A flexible bed strategy has seen the construction of 940 temporary beds across the prison system, including the construction of six 50-bed relocatable cellular accommodation units, the remainder being bunk beds.

## Prison redevelopments

### Beechworth prison

Construction of the \$20 million regional minimum security prison near Beechworth continued and the project is on schedule to be completed in 2004–2005. The prison is designed to accommodate up to 120 minimum security classified prisoners and 40 Corrections Victoria staff. The prison will take over from the existing Beechworth prison as a major facility in the Beechworth area.

The minimum security Langi Kal Kal Prison accommodates 110 prisoners. It is a pre-release prison focusing on re-integration issues such as accommodation, employment and family ties.



*The Minister for Corrections, André Haermeyer, (foreground right) and Tim Cave, Director of Major Projects, Department of Justice, (foreground left) discuss plans for the construction of the new 300-bed Correctional Programs Centre at Lara, near Geelong.*

The Langi Kal Kal Prison Redevelopment project was officially opened in March 2004. The project, which was completed on time and under budget, has upgraded accommodation and other prison-related facilities, including:

- construction of two new 14-bed prisoner accommodation units;
- refurbishment of an existing prisoner accommodation unit;
- construction of a new Officers Post and two Observation Cells; and
- construction of a six-megalitre dam to ensure the sustainability of water for fire management purposes.

In addition, construction of a new 26-bed unit at the medium security Ararat Prison continued in 2003–2004.

### Indigenous Adult Residential Diversion Program

As part of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, a \$1.75 million residential facility will be built to provide a diversionary option for Indigenous offenders. Following an extensive search and evaluation process, a site was purchased in December 2003 approximately 18 kilometres south of Euroa in central Victoria. The program will provide an alternative sentencing option for the Koori Courts in Shepparton, Broadmeadows and Warrnambool, and will cater for up to 20 offenders at any one time, with an average stay of four to six months.

## State-of-the-art technology

### Criminal Justice Enhancement Program

The five-year Criminal Justice Enhancement Program (CJEP) is linking vital parties across the Victorian justice system, including police, the courts, legal professionals and corrections. The program, which is scheduled for completion in early 2005, is introducing improved business processes, case management and the integration of an over-arching information sharing framework across the individual agencies. The program also ensures jurisdictional independence, data security and privacy protection.

Building on work from previous years, the program achieved a number of milestones in 2003–2004.

- Implementation of the E-Filing system in the County Court for lodgement and processing of civil cases. This allows civil law firms and litigants to initiate and respond to civil matters over the Internet. The system is cost-effective and convenient – lodgement of documents can occur 24 hours a day and does not require sending staff to the court. Documents are also returned online after they have been processed by the court.
- Implementation of the Attendance module of the E-Justice system, enabling computer-based access to data on offenders and accused persons who attend police stations for interview. It is anticipated that over 85,000 attendances will be recorded annually. The new system improves data accessibility and removes the need for manual forms and registers.
- Further trials of the E-Justice system in both prisons and community corrections environments. Trial results showed that the system was more efficient than traditional manual systems and improved data quality and timeliness. Training and roll-out of the next module is planned for early 2005.
- Completion of development, testing and training plans for the brief preparation module of E-Justice. This module is now ready for introduction in the Office of Public Prosecutions in 2004–2005.

### Strengthening emergency communications

In 2001, the Victorian Government endorsed the *Statewide Integrated Public Safety and Communications Strategy*. The aim of the strategy is to maximise value for money by using common infrastructure where possible and employing technologies that provide high quality management information for all emergency service organisations.

As part of the strategy, the Department is undertaking three major technology projects – the Mobile Data Network, the Metropolitan Mobile Radio and the Emergency Alerting System. These will enable emergency service organisations to strengthen and enhance communications and community safety in Victoria in the next decade.

The development and implementation of these projects is overseen on behalf of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services by a Ministerial Steering Committee comprising an independent chair with extensive telecommunications and business experience. Other members of the Committee include representatives and Chief Executive Officers' of

Victoria Police and emergency service organisations as well as senior representatives of the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury and Finance, Department of Human Service and the Minister's office.

#### Mobile Data Network

On 25 June 2003, the Victorian Government and Motorola Australia signed a contract to supply a Mobile Data Network (MDN). This will enable real-time operational information to be sent via Emergency Communications Victoria (ECV) computer-aided dispatch system to computer terminals located in police and emergency services vehicles and offices. The system also allows for the latest data to be reported from the field.

After a detailed design process, factory prototype testing and the pre-implementation review, MDN is now about to enter the pilot phase. Initial services will be on line and available for selected Metropolitan Ambulance Service and Victoria Police Pilot vehicles in late 2004, with full operations expected to commence in late 2005.

The MDN will provide for automatic incident dispatch from ECV. It will also provide remote database access, incident information, and automatic vehicle location for select Victoria Police and Metropolitan Ambulance Service vehicles. Secure and rapid transmission will enable more effective responses by emergency services. Victoria Police will use the MDN to assist in rapidly identifying unregistered vehicles and unlicensed drivers.

A performance management system will automatically record performance data and statistics. Results from the data can be used to improve the performance of emergency service organisations.

#### Metropolitan Mobile Radio

In March 2004, a contract was signed with Motorola Australia to supply a multi-agency digital radio system for use throughout the greater Melbourne metropolitan area. It is anticipated that the Victoria Police and the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFESB) will operate the system by late 2005, in time for the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

When fully implemented, the new system will replace the analogue networks currently used by the Victoria Police, the MFESB, and the Metropolitan Ambulance Service and will provide enhanced security for voice and data transmissions, improved coverage, and allow for a range of emergency call features.

#### Emergency Alerting System

In June 2004, a contract was signed with VEC Networks for an Emergency Alerting System (EAS) – a personal alerting system for emergency service staff and volunteers. It is anticipated that the EAS will begin operating in selected regions of the State in time for the 2004–2005 fire season. Full operations will commence in 2005, giving an unprecedented 95 per cent coverage of the State.

The system will enable emergency services to instantly receive and send up-to-date, text-based information at the incident site. The project will provide infrastructure and messaging devices for up to 29,000 staff and volunteers from the Country Fire Authority, Rural Ambulance Victoria and the Victoria State Emergency Service.