

01

Helping
Families

02

Supporting Frontline
Workers

03

More Support,
Where It's Needed

04

Prevention is Better
than a Cure

05

Reducing Supply
on Our Streets

06

Safer, Stronger
Communities

ICE ACTION PLAN

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Printed by Impact Digital

ACCESSIBILITY

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the Department of Premier and Cabinet on 9651 5111 or email dpc@dpc.vic.gov.au.

CONTENTS

The Things That Cannot Wait	4
Victoria's Ice Action Plan	5
The Drug That Got Away From Us	7
01 Helping Families	8
02 Supporting Frontline Workers	10
03 More Support, Where It's Needed	12
04 Prevention is Better than a Cure	14
05 Reducing Supply on Our Streets	16
06 Safer, Stronger Communities	18
What's Next	21
Appendix 1: Terms of Reference	22
Appendix 2: Membership	23



THE THINGS THAT CANNOT WAIT

Across our state, good, smart kids are dropping out of school, running away from their families and falling out of society.

Workers are getting attacked. Innocent people are dying, in their homes and on the roads.

Ice is ruining lives, and the time to act is now.

In one of my first acts as Premier, I established the Ice Action Taskforce – bringing together Victoria Police, and legal, health and youth experts to investigate the problem and provide a plan to reduce demand, supply and harm.

We must come down hard on the manufacturers and peddlers who put this substance on our streets.

We have to give users the treatment they need and give families the support they deserve.

We have to work with communities, strengthen the justice system and keep frontline workers safe.

Most importantly, we must help prevent a generation of young people from using ice in the first place.

It's a tough but balanced plan – and it's just the start.

I've listened to the experts who see the devastating effects of ice every day, and I know that our Ice Action Plan can stop this drug on the streets *and* at the source.

It's all part of our effort to help families and save lives.

These are the things that cannot wait.

And it doesn't end here. The Taskforce is staying on the job to make sure we stay on track.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Andrews'.

The Hon. Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria

VICTORIA'S ICE ACTION PLAN

01 Helping Families

- > \$4.7 million in additional support for families and communities to prevent and address ice use
- > New dedicated Ice Help Line – a one-stop shop that directs families and health professionals to the support they need

02 Supporting Frontline Workers

- > \$1 million for training courses to give frontline workers the skills they need to deal with users, and expand clinical supervision training

03 More Support, Where It's Needed

- > \$18 million to expand drug treatment, focusing on rehabilitation for users in rural and regional areas
- > \$1.8 million for Needle and Syringe Programs (NSPs) to make harm reduction more effective

04 Prevention is Better than a Cure

- > Supporting skills and creating more jobs
- > Education campaigns that target people who are most at risk
- > Smarter use of technology

05 Reducing Supply on Our Streets

- > \$4.5 million to expand Victoria Police's forensic analysis capability to shut down clandestine laboratories

06 Safer, Stronger Communities

- > \$15 million for new drug and booze buses to get ice users off the road
- > \$500,000 to support the work of people who know their communities best





THE DRUG THAT GOT AWAY FROM US

Methamphetamines aren't new. While use has remained relatively stable at around 2 per cent of the population, harms are increasing.

One of the main reasons for this is the shift in use from the powdered form of the drug, commonly known as speed, to the more potent and dangerous crystallised form, ice.

It's taking young and innocent lives, contributing to family violence, and ice-fuelled drug-driving is causing carnage on our roads.

Data from police and emergency services reveals the extent of the crisis.

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, the number of methamphetamine-related ambulance attendances increased by 88 per cent in metropolitan Melbourne and nearly 200 per cent in regional Victoria.

During this time, methamphetamine-related emergency department presentations rose 20 per cent.

Acute drug toxicity deaths involving methamphetamine have increased from one in 25 deaths in 2010, to one in 11 deaths in 2012.

The Victorian Parliament's 2014 *Inquiry into the Supply and Use of Methamphetamines, particularly 'ice', in Victoria* identified the rise in ice use by young people between 20 and 29, and its disproportionate effects in regional Victoria.

It's a complex problem. It demands a real, concerted solution.

01

HELPING FAMILIES

Mums, dads, grandparents and siblings are bearing the brunt of a destructive drug. Families and friends are finding it hard to understand why the people they care about have changed so much, so quickly.

Violence, paranoia and deception are common behaviours that families cope with when someone is using ice. Knowing how best to help a family member in these circumstances will help reduce the harm.

Teaching families to identify problems

This plan delivers \$4.7 million in additional support for families. This investment will include the development and delivery of innovative training to help families know when there's a problem and what to do. It will also expand support for family members affected by a loved one's drug use and give families the help they need, sooner.

Help is only a phone call away

Knowing where to turn for help will only be a phone call away with a dedicated Ice Help Line – a one-stop shop that directs families and health professionals to the support they need. Whether you're concerned about your own drug use, or a family member's, or you are a health professional needing clinical advice, the Ice Help Line will refer you to expert advice.

Keeping children safe

The Victorian Government will protect children from those who expose them to clandestine drug laboratories and will act to boost the ability of Victoria Police's Forensic Drug Branch to shut down these illegal labs.



02

SUPPORTING FRONTLINE WORKERS

Police and emergency workers have described the drug as 'like no other' because of the bewildering speed at which ice sends people spiraling out of control. The potential for aggression and violence makes the occupational hazards high for police, paramedics, nurses, doctors, child protection workers, social workers, prison officers, and others on the frontline.

Preventing occupational violence

More than 14,000 violent incidents were recorded in 14 major Victorian hospitals in 2012-13. Prevention and management of occupational violence for our frontline workforce is a priority for the Victorian Government. People have a right to be safe at work. The Government has set up the Specialist Workforce Advisory Group to provide specific advice on the issues affecting workers. We have committed \$20 million to the *Health Service Violence Prevention Fund* to make workplaces safer and more secure.

A mental health workforce plan will also be developed. To encourage a culture of workplace security, health and mental health services will be required to publicly report violent incidents and develop a consistent response to violent incidents.

Standard ice training

Current training for workers who come into contact with people affected by ice varies significantly across the state. Some good lessons are being learned but aren't routinely shared.

This plan delivers \$400,000 to develop a standard best practice training curriculum, which can be tailored to each workplace to better equip workers. Training will also help workers respond to the diverse needs of different groups in our communities.

There is still more to be done. The Victorian Government will further examine opportunities for the roll-out of training to affected frontline workers.

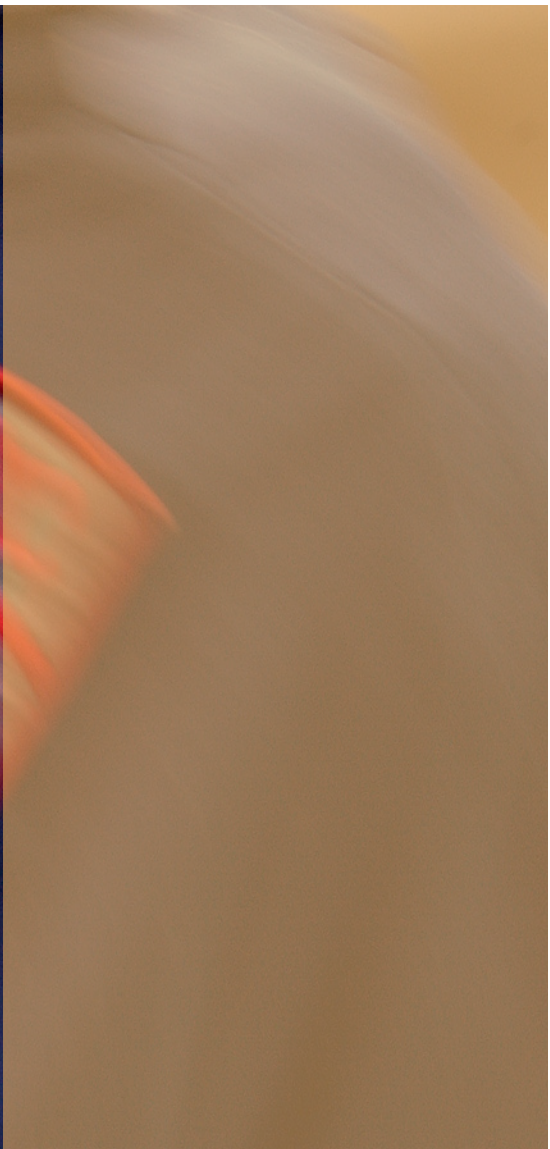
The Victorian Government will also support alcohol and other drug treatment and mental health workers by investing \$600,000 to strengthen and extend clinical supervision training.

Building specialist capability

Strengthening addiction medicine capability within the Victorian health system will also be explored, given its important part in supporting the broader health workforce and achieving good outcomes for complex clients.

Engagement with the Commonwealth Government will be important in this area, given its role in shaping training and career pathways for medical specialists.





03

MORE SUPPORT, WHERE IT'S NEEDED

As the purity of ice increases, so does the risk of drug-induced psychosis, violence and aggression, the potential for dependence, and chronic physical and mental health problems. Smarter use of technology, innovative new approaches to drug rehabilitation and community partnerships will help more people get the support they need sooner.

More drug rehabilitation

The Victorian Government will invest \$18 million in innovative models of rehabilitation, allowing more people to get the help they need sooner. This investment will focus on our rural and regional communities, where services are needed most – making more services available across the state.

Getting help earlier

People who need support for issues associated with ice use shouldn't have to wait until their problems become acute. We will explore how community health may play a role in supporting people earlier in the course of their drug use. We will also look at ways to build stronger pathways between drug treatment services and other health settings, including the GPs in Schools pilot initiative, where GPs will visit 100 secondary schools in disadvantaged areas.

Innovation and best practice

The Victorian Government funds a range of specialist drug treatment and harm reduction services including withdrawal, rehabilitation and counseling services for prisoners, peer education programs, and the provision of safe injecting equipment. We will continue to work with clients and families to make our services more effective by embracing innovation and best practice.

Needle and syringe programs

For injecting ice users, Victoria's Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) helps reduce the harm from drug use for them and the community. It also gives users a brief window for non-judgmental health advice and referral to other services, including treatment, when clients are ready. The Victorian Government is delivering \$1.8 million in additional investment for NSPs.





04

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN A CURE

We will build on our world-leading drug education programs in schools, help teachers identify and support young people at risk and reach out to people who have fallen through the gaps.

A stable job means a stable life

Over the last few years, as youth unemployment has increased, so as the rate of crime and drug use. Employment gives people direction and dignity. The Victorian Government is implementing a \$1 billion plan to get people back to work and a \$320 million TAFE Rescue Fund. We are supporting skills and creating more jobs, so people at risk of falling out of our economy and our society can get a second chance.

Education, education, education

Victoria is proud to have a world-leading drug education curriculum and evidence-based resources that help schools develop resilient young people who make good decisions. The Victorian Government will also investigate a statewide awareness campaign in partnership with community and sporting groups. We know that scare tactics don't work. All campaigns will focus on targeting the groups we know are most at risk with credible messages.

Smarter use of technology

Young people live in a digital world. We need to join them there. The Government will explore better use of smartphone and online resources, including self-management tools for early intervention. A dedicated Ice Help Line will ensure young people, as well as families and other members of the community, have a place to turn for instant advice and non-judgmental help.



05

REDUCING SUPPLY ON OUR STREETS

Australia has become a lucrative market for ice. The drug is cheap and easily available. Victoria Police is working with national and international taskforces to stop the manufacture, supply and distribution of ice. Whether the drug is imported from overseas or produced locally in illicit labs, we will support police in their efforts to reduce the supply of ice.

Cracking down on clandestine drug labs

The Victorian Government will expand Victoria Police's Forensic Drug Branch through a \$4.5 million investment to help track down and close clandestine drug labs. By increasing its drug profiling and intelligence capability, the Drug Branch can provide important data more quickly to help investigators undertake scientific examinations of clandestine laboratories.

Tough new laws to stop dealers

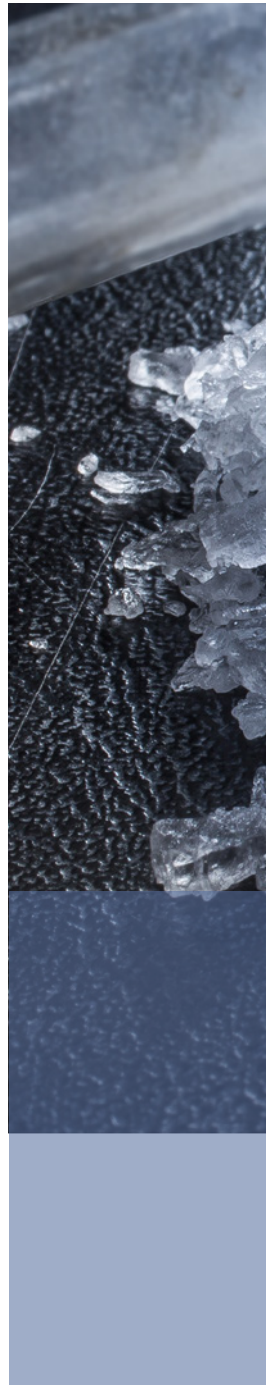
New offences will be introduced to target people who deal ice to school children or around school premises. New offences will also deal with the publication of instructions for how to make ice, allowing a premises to be used as a clandestine drug lab and using violence or threats to force another person to deal ice.

Controlling supply of precursor chemicals

Over-the-counter pharmacy medicine and common household chemicals are used to manufacture ice. Controlling supply of chemicals that have a wider and legitimate purpose is complex, so the Victorian Government will work with industry, Victoria Police and the Commonwealth Government on the most effective ways to prevent illicit use of these chemicals.

Following the money

The money from this illicit drug does not respect state or national borders. Following the money trail can help authorities prosecute those profiting from drug addiction. The Victorian Government will continue to engage in national discussions regarding unexplained wealth laws and monitor the implementation of recent changes to the law to make sure they're effective.





06

SAFER, STRONGER COMMUNITIES

We've heard about the violent outbursts on trains and in hospital waiting rooms. We've seen the horrible images of wasted young lives and the carnage from horrific car accidents. Ice also fuels family violence – the number one law and order issue in our state. The Andrews Labor Government will provide new drug and booze buses, support grassroots community groups and design safe rooms at public hospitals and mental health facilities.

Making our roads safer

We will invest \$15 million for new drug and booze buses to make Victoria's roads safer. A dedicated road safety education complex will also bring young drivers face to face with the devastating aftermath of bad decisions and unsafe driving. All learner drivers will receive defensive driving training to make them think twice about drug driving.

Making our justice system stronger

The Drug Court, Neighbourhood Justice Centre and Court Integrated Services Program are all reducing rates of re-offending and creating safer communities. We remain committed to effective responses that help low-level offenders get their life back on track, instead of spiraling into more crime and addiction. Victoria Police has developed a strategy in response to ice that includes a focus on reducing re-offending by using treatment and diversion programs.

Community knows best

Communities can help remove the stigma associated with ice, so people feel confident enough to seek help and know how and where to get it. For example, in Mildura, health, welfare, Aboriginal leaders and enforcement agencies came together with local media to raise awareness. We will provide \$500,000 to fund more Community Ice Action Groups to help communities conduct forums, promote education and evaluate the most effective local strategies.

Meeting the needs of our diverse communities

Fundamental to the success of this plan will be how we work together to understand and design initiatives that meet the specific challenges of local communities and at risk populations, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) communities.

For Aboriginal communities, strong partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, are critical to make sure community members have access to the services they need, when they need them.







WHAT'S NEXT

The Ice Action Plan is about investment and action in the things that can't wait. But there's more to be done.

The solution to the crisis is well outside the scope of one government, one policy area, or one community campaign – it needs a sustained, long-term strategy with the community at its heart. With the Ice Action Plan, we now have a coordinated strategy to reduce the harm from ice use across Victoria.

In the future, we will focus on options to expand diversion programs and other effective justice responses, prevention initiatives, such as evidence-based education programs, the roll-out of training to affected frontline workers, and building capacity for early intervention and specialist treatment. The work of the Ice Action Taskforce isn't over. The Premier has given the Taskforce a long-term role to support the implementation of the Ice Action Plan and advise the Government where more effort is needed.

The Victorian Government will also work with the Commonwealth Government to improve the evidence base, support research into ice and pharmacotherapy treatment options, and investigate options to enhance data collections and measure the success of existing investments.

Protecting against substance abuse also means supporting young people who are unemployed or at risk of dropping out of school. We are building a fairer and stronger economy by saving our TAFE system and creating more jobs, because rising rates of youth unemployment, crime and drug use are all related.

Appendix 1: Terms of reference

Overview

The Andrews Labor Government is establishing an Ice Action Taskforce to deliver an Ice Action Plan for Victoria within the first 100 days of government, in response to the increased harm being experienced from use of the drug ice.

In developing the plan, the Taskforce will be guided by the findings of the Victorian Parliament's *Inquiry into the supply and use of methamphetamines, particularly 'ice', in Victoria*, which drew on a wide range of expert submissions and public hearings.

The Taskforce will examine responses being led by different communities across Victoria, and consider evidence from other jurisdictions.

Aim

The primary purpose of the Ice Action Taskforce is to develop an Ice Action Plan by 14 March 2015.

The Taskforce will examine strategies to reduce the demand, supply and harm associated with ice use, including regulatory, law enforcement, prevention, education and treatment responses.

The Taskforce will particularly examine responses that:

- > target the manufacture and supply of ice
- > reduce ice-related crimes, including ice-fuelled violence
- > focus on preventing ice use and building awareness of ice-related harm
- > highlight best practice in treatment services
- > support family members, in particular children, affected by the use of ice by others
- > support the health and safety of frontline service workers and their capacity to carry out their roles and responsibilities when working with people affected by ice
- > address the particular impacts of ice on regional communities, and Aboriginal and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Victorians, and
- > effectively coordinate the responses of government agencies, law enforcement, community groups and service providers.

The Ice Action Taskforce will be chaired by the Premier of Victoria and include representatives with ice expertise so Victoria can better respond to the impacts of ice.

A Specialist Workforce Advisory Group will work in parallel to the Taskforce and advise it on issues affecting police, doctors, nurses, paramedics and health, community and support services workers.

Appendix 2: Membership

Ice Action Taskforce

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP	Premier
The Hon Jill Hennessy MP	Minister for Health
Mr Martin Foley MP	Minister for Mental Health
Mr Gavin Jennings MLC	Special Minister of State
The Hon Wade Noonan MP	Minister for Police
The Hon Martin Pakula MP	Attorney-General
Deputy Commissioner Lucinda Nolan	Deputy Commissioner, Victoria Police
Magistrate Anthony Parsons	Presiding Magistrate, Drug Court of Victoria
Professor Patrick McGorry AO	Director, Orygen Youth Health and Orygen Youth Health Research Centre
Mr Sam Biondo	Executive Officer, Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association
Ms Melanie Raymond	Chair, Youth Projects
Major Brendan Nottle	Salvation Army
Ms Liana Buchanan	Executive Officer, Federation of Community Legal Centres
Mr Rudolph (Rudy) Kirby	Chief Executive Officer, Mallee District Aboriginal Services
Mr John Ryan	Chief Executive Officer, Penington Institute
Professor Dan Lubman	Director, Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre

Specialist Workforce Advisory Group

Ms Bella Anderson	Branch Committee of Management, Health and Community Services Union
Dr Tony Bartone	President, Australian Medical Association Victoria
Ms Karen Batt	State Secretary, Community and Public Sector Union Victoria
Ms Pip Carew	Assistant Secretary, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Victorian Branch
Mr Ron Iddles	Secretary, The Police Association
Mr Steve McGhie	General Secretary, Ambulance Employees Australia of Victoria
Ms Cheryl Sobczyk	Senior Manager, Bendigo Community Health Services

