

Thursday 30 April 2026

[Starts]

ACIC wastewater drug report reveals unprecedented levels of substance use

The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA) is concerned by the record levels of substance use reported within the community.

The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) 25th report of the [National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program](#) revealed that consumption of heroin, cocaine and methylamphetamine has reached unprecedented levels of consumption.

The consequences of these record levels will be significant community harms, made worse by limited access to alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment and harm reduction services in Victoria. The number of Victorians waiting for AOD treatment has soared since the start of the pandemic, [with a 90% rise from 2385 to 4550](#) people waiting each day. Symptomatic of this unmet need is the most recent [Coroners Court overdose data](#), indicating that 584 Victorians fatally overdosed in 2024, the highest number on record.

Chris Christoforou, CEO of VAADA, says, 'There is an immediate need for a coordinated response by the Victorian and Commonwealth governments through increased levels of investment in alcohol and other drug treatment, harm reduction and prevention services. The upcoming Victorian and Commonwealth budgets must allocate appropriate levels of resourcing to respond to this crisis.'

'Currently, Commonwealth investment in drug and alcohol programs amounts to one cup of coffee for every Australian. This is manifestly inadequate to meet community needs for intervention and support. The risk of harm to the Victorian community is urgent and real. While the Victorian Alcohol and Other Drug Strategy is a necessary step to building a plan for an improved service system, the Victorian government must respond to these immediate threats now.'

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact David Taylor on 0413 914 206.

[ends]

Media stories on alcohol and other drugs may be traumatic for some people. Support is available, and we ask that media agencies consider publishing the details below:

If this story has raised concerns about your or others' drug and alcohol use, contact the national hotline for confidential counselling and referral on 1800 250 015

VAADA is the peak body that represents over 80 Alcohol and other Drug services across Victoria. These services deal with the effects of harmful alcohol and other drug consumption daily.