# **9. CRIMINAL DIVISION – CUSTODY & BAIL**

**[9.0 Amendments to the Bail Act in 2018 and in 2024](#_9.0_Major_amendments_1)**

[**9.0.1 Major amendments to the Bail Act in 2018**](#_9.0.1_Major_amendments) **+ some associated definitions**

[**9.0.2 Coronial criticism of the 2018 amendments**](#_9.0.2_Coronial_criticism)

[**9.0.3 The Bail Amendment Act 2023 (as from 25/03/2024)**](#_9.0.3_The_Bail)

[**9.0.4 Amendments to the Bail Act in 2024 & 2025**](#_9.0.4_Further_amendments)

[**9.1 Child in custody**](#_9.1_Child_in_2)

[**9.1.1 Prescribed regions for 2 day bail justice remand**](#_9.1.1_Prescribed_regions)

[**9.1.2 Placement of remanded child**](#_9.1.2_Placement_of)

**[9.1.3 Breach of Children’s Court sentencing order](#_9.1.3_Breach_of)**

[**9.2 Bail – Legislation**](#_9.2_Bail_-)

[**9.2.1 Differences between child & adult**](#_9.2.1_Differences_between)

[**9.2.2 Additional considerations in bail determinations for children**](#_9.2.2_Additional_considerations)

**[9.2.3 Powers & duties of a bail decision maker](#_9.2.3_Application_for)**

[**9.2.4 *Prima facie* entitlement to bail and exceptions thereto – Flow charts**](#_9.2.3_Prima_facie)

[**9.2.5 Step 1 – exceptional circumstances test**](#_9.2.4_Step_1)

[**9.2.6 Step 1 – show compelling reason test**](#_9.2.5_Step_1)

[**9.2.5/6 Meaning of ‘serving a sentence’ for the tests in 9.2.5 & 9.2.6**](#_9.2.4/5_Meaning_of)

[**9.2.7 Relevance of ‘risk’ in determining ‘exceptional circs’/‘compelling reason’**](#_9.2.7_Relevance_of)

[**9.2.8 Meaning of ‘strength of the prosecution case’**](#_9.2.7_Meaning_of)

[**9.2.9 Bail application where possible family violence issue**](#_9.2.7_Bail_application)

[**9.2.10 Requirement for reasons when bail granted**](#_9.2.8_Requirement_for)

[**9.2.11 Bail Regulations 2022**](#_9.2.11_Bail_Regulations)

[**9.3 Bail – History, Questions, Factors & Principles**](#_9.3_Bail_–_1)

**[9.4 Bail – 'Exceptional circumstances', 'Show compelling reason', 'Unacceptable risk'](#_9.4_Bail_-_1)**

[**9.4.1 Exceptional circumstances**](#_9.4.1_Exceptional_circumstances)

[**9.4.1.1 CASES:EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOUND – BAIL GRANTED**](#_9.4.1.1_SOME_CASES)

**[9.4.1.2 CASES:EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES NOT FOUND –BAIL REFUSED](#_9.4.1.2_SOME_CASES_2)**

[**9.4.1.3 CASES: EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOUND BUT UNACC. RISK**](#_9.4.1.3_SOME_CASES_1)

**[9.4.2 Show compelling reason (previously show cause) / Unacceptable risk](#_9.4.2_Show_compelling)**

[**9.4.2.1 How does an accused show compelling reason (show cause)**](#_9.4.4.1_How_does)

[**9.4.2.2 CASES: COMPELLING REASON FOUND – BAIL GRANTED**](#_9.4.4.4_SOME_CASES)

[**9.4.2.3 CASES: COMPELLING REASON FOUND BUT UNACCEPTABLE RISK**](#_9.4.4.5_SOME_CASES)

[**9.4.2.4 CASES: COMPELLING REASON NOT FOUND – BAIL REFUSED**](#_9.4.2.4_SOME_CASES)

**[9.4.3 Where likelihood of sentence is less than time likely to be spent in custody](#_9.4.3_Where_likelihood_1)**

**[9.4.4 Unacceptable risk](#_9.4.4_Unacceptable_risk)**

[**9.4.4.1 Otherwise unacceptable risk deemed acceptable due to particular circs**](#_9.4.4.1_Where_unacceptable)

[**9.4.4.2 CASES: PRIMA FACIE RIGHT/ACCUSED NOT AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK**](#_9.4.4.7_SOME_CASES)

[**9.4.4.3 CASES: PRIMA FACIE RIGHT/ACCUSED AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK**](#_9.4.4.8_SOME_CASES)

[**9.4.5 Whether bail conditions an element of exceptional circs/compelling reason**](#_9.4.5_Whether_or)

[**9.4.6 Refusal of bail where person seriously injured**](#_9.4.6_Refusal_of)

[**9.4.7 Bail pending pre-sentence or other report**](#_9.4.7_Bail_pending)

[**9.4.8 Bail pending appeal against conviction or sentence**](#_9.4.8_Bail_pending)

[**9.4.9 Relevance of the standard of medical care in custodial facility**](#_9.4.9_Relevance_of)

[**9.4.10 Relevance of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**](#_9.4.10_Relevance_of)

[**9.4.11 Relevance of Aboriginality**](#_9.4.11_Relevance_of)

[**9.4.12 Relevance of youth**](#_9.4.12_Relevance_of)

[**9.5 Bail – A Miscellany**](#_9.5_Bail_-)

[**9.5.1 Whether the principle of ‘parity’ applies to bail proceedings**](#_9.5.1_Whether_the)

[**9.5.2 Bail undertaking, conduct conditions**](#_9.5.2_Bail_undertaking) **& electronic monitoring conditions**

[**9.5.3 Bail guarantees/guarantors (formerly known as sureties) & deposits of money**](#_9.5.3_Bail_guarantees/guarantors)

[**9.5.4 Extension of bail**](#_9.5.4_Extension_of)

[**9.5.5 Reasons and sufficiency thereof**](#_9.5.5_Reasons_and)

[**9.5.6 Further application for bail – New facts or circumstances**](#_9.5.6_Further_application)

[**9.5.6.1 CASES IN WHICH NEW FACTS/CIRCUMSTANCES WERE DISCUSSED**](#_9.5.6.1_SOME_CASES)

[**9.5.7 Application to vary bail**](#_9.5.7_Application_to)

[**9.5.8 Application to revoke bail**](#_9.5.8_Application_to)

[**9.5.9 Appeal**](#_9.5.9_Appeal_to)

[**9.5.9.1 Appeal to the Supreme Court**](#_9.5.9.1_Appeal_by)

[**9.5.9.2 Appeal to the Court of Appeal**](#_9.5.9.2_Appeal_to)

[**9.5.10 Breach of bail**](#_9.5.12_Breach_of)

[**9.5.11 Arrest of person released on bail**](#_9.5.11_Arrest_of)

[**9.5.12 Extradition bail**](#_9.5.12_Extradition_bail)

[**9.5.13 No concept of being ‘owed bail’**](#_9.5.13_No_concept)

[**9.5.14 Bail applications by children compared with adults**](#_9.5.14_Bail_applications)

[**9.5.15 Bail applications by persons aged 18 or over in a remand centre**](#_9.5.15_Bail_applications)

[**9.5.16 Power to return accused to youth justice centre**](#_9.5.16_Power_to)

[**9.5.17 Bail support services**](#_9.5.17_Bail_support)

[**9.5.17.1 CISP – Bail support service for adults**](#_9.5.17.1_CISP_–)

[**9.5.17.2 Bail support program & service for children**](#_9.5.17.2_Bail_support)

[**9.5.17.3 The dangers in detoxification by ‘drying out’ in custody**](#_9.5.17.2_The_dangers)

Some of the material in **Parts 9.3 & 9.4** is taken, with her kind permission, from a private research paper entitled "A Digest of Bail Cases", prepared by former Deputy Chief Magistrate Jelena Popovic. The paper is not available to the public. The cases in this Digest mostly relate to adults but the principles are also broadly applicable to children. However, apart from those cases in which issues of principle are discussed, most of the cases turn on their particular facts and are of limited use as precedent.

It should be noted that throughout the *Bail Act 1977* and throughout **Chapter 9** “***prison*** includes remand centre or youth justice centre under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* [CYFA] and any other place where persons may be detained in legal custody and ***imprisonment*** has a corresponding interpretation”: see s.3 **BA**.

From 25/03/2024 the term “**surety**” is replaced by “**bail guarantee**” or “**bail guarantor**” as the context requires. Wherever “surety” is used in this Chapter in reference to specific provisions in the *Bail Act 1977* it has been replaced by “bail guarantee” or “bail guarantor”. However, the term “surety” has been retained in relation to the discussion of any relevant case in this Chapter decided earlier than 25/03/2024.

## **UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE, ALL LEGISLATION REFERRED TO IS VICTORIAN.**

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## **9.0 Amendments to the Bail Act in 2018 and in 2024**

### **9.0.1** **Major amendments to the Bail Act in 2018 + some associated definitions**

Following a review of the operation of the Act by Mr Paul Coghlan, stage one of major amendments to the *Bail Act 1977* [No.9008] [‘**BA**’] came into operation on 21/05/2018, stage two on 01/07/2018 and stage three on 01/10/2018. The amendments commencing on 01/07/2018 included a substantial renumbering of sections. Those commencing on 01/10/2018 primarily involved terrorism-related circumstances and amendments to **BA**/ss.4AA & 4A-4D. The other major amendments are as follows:

* **Purpose**: Section 1A provides that the purpose of the **BA** is to provide a legislative framework for the making of decisions as to whether a person accused of an offence should be granted bail with or without conditions.
* **Guiding principles**: Section 1B provides that it is the intention of Parliament that the **BA** is to be applied and interpreted having regard to the importance of-

1. maximising safety of the community and persons affected by crime to greatest extent possible;
2. taking account of the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty;
3. promoting fairness, transparency and consistency in bail decision making; and
4. promoting public understanding of bail practices and procedures.

Section 1B **BA** was further amended as from 26/03/2025: see **Part 9.3**.

* “**Bail decision maker**” is defined in s.3 as a court, a bail justice, a police officer or the sheriff or a person authorised under section 115(5) of the *Fines Reform Act* 2014 empowered under the **BA** to grant bail, extend bail, vary the amount of bail or the conditions of bail or revoke bail.
* “**Prosecutor**” in relation to an application under the **BA** includes the informant, a police prosecutor and any other person appearing on behalf of the Crown.
* “**Schedule 1 offence**” means an offence specified in Schedule 1 of the **BA** and, if circumstances are specified in Schedule 1 in relation to that offence, means an offence committed in those circumstances. The Schedule 1 offences – for which a bail decision maker must refuse bail unless the accused shows that **exceptional circumstances exist** which justify the grant of bail – are listed in **section 9.2.5** below. See also the definition of “**step 1 – exceptional circumstances test**” in s.4A of the **BA**.
* “**Schedule 2 offence**” means an offence specified in Schedule 2 of the **BA** and, if circumstances are specified in Schedule 2 in relation to that offence, means an offence committed in those circumstances. The Schedule 2 offences – for which a bail decision maker must refuse bail unless the accused shows–
* **a compelling reason** [formerly described as the accused being required to **show cause**] why his or her detention in custody is not justified; or
* in the circumstances set out in s.4AA(2), that **exceptional circumstances exist** which justify the grant of bail–

are listed in **section 9.2.6** below. See also the definition of “**step 1 – show compelling reason test**” in s.4B of the **BA**.

* “**Surrounding circumstances**” is defined in s.3AAA and involves a non-exhaustive list of considerations which a bail decision maker must take into account.
* “**Vulnerable adult**” is defined in s.3AAAA as a person 18 years of age or more who has a cognitive, physical or mental health impairment that causes the person to have difficulty in (a) understanding their rights; (b) making a decision; or (c) communicating a decision. Certain provisions of the **BA** which prevent a police officer or bail justice from granting bail do not apply to a vulnerable adult. The definition is limited to adults as all children are similarly exempted.
* **Tests for granting bail**: Section 4 of the **BA** is completely rewritten (in new ss.4, 4AAA, 4AA, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D & 4E) which makes it clear that where there are two tests involved, they are to be applied in a ‘two stage’ process: first the reverse onus test and then the unacceptable risk test.
* **Accused affected by alcohol/drugs**: New ss.8(3) & 8(4) permit a bail decision maker to adjourn a bail hearing for a limited time where an accused appears to be seriously affected by alcohol and/or drugs and to remand the accused in custody in the interim.
* **Family violence**: New s.5AAAA requires a bail decision maker to enquire about family violence and to consider the risk of family violence.
* **Bail conditions**: Section 5 has been redrafted to refer specifically to bail undertakings and to improve its structure and wording. A new s.5AAA relates to conduct conditions, including a condition inconsistent with a family violence order or notice [s.5AAA(3)]. New s.5AAB re sureties.
* **Court’s power to place on bail or remand a person before it on summons in certain circumstances**: New s.12B.

### **9.0.2 Coronial criticism of the 2018 amendments**

In *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* (Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023) Coroner McGregor detailed the tragic aggregation of systemic failures which had led up to the death of 37-year old Veronica, a proud Gunditjmara, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta woman, who passed away in the State’s custody on 02/01/2020. She had been remanded in custody at the time of her passing, having been refused bail for relatively minor, non-violent offences. On 30/12/2019 she had been arrested on outstanding warrants for failure to appear before the Shepparton Koori Court and on whereabouts notices relating to thefts from shops alleged to have occurred in October and November 2019. The Shepparton magistrate who had issued the warrants had endorsed them with a notation that Veronica may be released on bail upon entering an undertaking to appear at Shepparton Magistrates’ Court.

Later on 30/12/2019 Veronica was charged with these latter shop thefts and with failing to appear on bail. As a consequence of the Bail Act amendments in 2018 Veronica was required to demonstrate ‘exceptional circumstances’ warranting a grant of bail, notwithstanding the relatively minor nature of these offences if found proved and despite the fact that she had already served 82 days of pre-trial detention. Notwithstanding that s.13(4) of the **BA** gives police a discretion to grant bail to an Aboriginal person in these circumstances, police failed to consider the s.13(4)(a) discretion, Coroner McGregor noting at [273] that “The failure suggests a lack of appreciation that s13(4)(a) of the Bail Act is intended to mitigate the effects of the reverse onus regime and that the mitigation provided is broadest for Aboriginal accused.” Veronica’s case was not reached at the Melbourne Magistrates’ Court Bail and Remand Court that night and she was remanded in custody until the following day. The barrister briefed to appear for Veronica the following day, having spoken to his client for 6 minutes, believes that he suggested that Veronica “make an in‑person application for bail because he had formed the view that an application did not have merit”. She did so and bail was ultimately refused, the Melbourne Magistrate not being satisfied that Veronica had established ‘exceptional circumstances’.

During the application the prosecutor had failed to make any express reference to s.3A of the **BA** and factors relevant to Veronica’s Aboriginality, a failure described by the Coroner as a failure “to properly consider Veronica’s Charter rights”. At [328] the Coroner held:

“The orders made at the conclusion of the bail hearing reflected no custody management issues that might have been informed by discussion of Veronica’s health needs. Ensuring that judicial officers understand and can manage the barriers to disclosure of health information is necessary to safeguard the wellbeing of people in custody. The [Melbourne] Magistrate’s orders adjourning Veronica’s matters to 13/01/2023 at Shepparton Magistrates’ Court before Magistrate Farram included the following notation: ‘the accused is an [A]boriginal person. Recommend all reasonable assessment and supervision to ensure safe custody.’”

Coroner McGregor was especially critical of what he described at [377] as **“the complete and unmitigated disaster of the 2018 changes to the Bail Act”**. His Honour referred at [364] to “the profound effects of the 2018 Bail Act changes on individuals and systems”, in particular noting:

1. criminalisation of bail offences, the reverse onus regime and the unacceptable risk test – have separate and mutually reinforcing effects increasing the likelihood that an accused will be remanded in custody;
2. the effects are widespread but are disproportionately experienced by individuals already marginalised and vulnerable, particularly Aboriginal women; and
3. the repercussions include erosion of the presumption of innocence, indirect effects on pleas of guilty and sentencing outcomes, pressure on the legal and correctional systems (among others) and entrenchment of disadvantage.

At [372]-[373] his Honour found that before the 2018 changes Aboriginal people comprised 8.2% of all prisoners and Aboriginal women comprised 10% of female prisoners in Victoria. Overall, most adults in prison were serving a prison sentence. A year after the 2018 Bail Act changes were introduced, the statistical picture had changed markedly. By June 2019, Aboriginal prisoners comprised more than 10% of all prisoners and Aboriginal women made up 14% of all female prisoners. By this time more than a third of all adults in prison were unsentenced and nearly half (47.7%) of all Aboriginal prisoners and 86% of Aboriginal women were unsentenced. Forty-five per cent of unsentenced men and 61% of unsentenced women were remanded in custody for alleged offences not involving violence. These statistics led his Honour to find at [375] that “the Bail Act has a discriminatory impact on First Nations people resulting in grossly disproportionate rates of remand in custody, the most egregious of which affect alleged offenders who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women.”

At [367] & [377] his Honour concluded:

[367] “Before the 2018 Bail Act changes, only a small number of very serious offences attracted the highest reverse onus threshold for the grant of bail. This is no longer the case. Now, repeated bail offences (particularly) and objectively not serious offences, presenting no risk to community safety and that are unlikely to attract a prison sentence, routinely result in remand because they attract the ‘exceptional circumstance’ test. Low-level, non-violent offending is frequently directly linked to social circumstances including homelessness, long-term unemployment, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependence, displacement or Aboriginality.”

[377] “The complete and unmitigated disaster of the 2018 changes to the Bail Act is most obviously inflicted on the accused who are incarcerated, often for short periods and for unproven offending of a type that often ought not result in imprisonment if proven. Short periods in custody are destabilising and often serve to exacerbate issues underlying the person’s alleged offending by producing loss of housing, work or income, the breakdown of relationships and support networks, and disrupted access to treatment and other services. These outcomes are plainly antithetical to rehabilitation and adversely affect the underlying social issues that drive offending.”

Ultimately his Honour made the following recommendations at Appendix C in relation to the **BA**:

3. I recommend the urgent review of the Bail Act with a view to repeal of any provision having a disproportionate adverse effect on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

4. I recommend urgent legislative amendment of the Bail Act including that:

4.1. section 4AA(2)(c) is repealed (‘double uplift’);

4.2. clause 1 of Schedule 2 is repealed (including any indictable offence in certain circumstances within reverse onus regime);

4.3. clause 30 of Schedule 2 is repealed (including bail offences within reverse onus regime);

4.4. section 18(4) is repealed;

4.5. section 30 is repealed (failure to answer bail);

4.6. section 30A is repealed (contravention of conduct condition of bail);

4.7. section 30B is repealed (commit indictable offence on bail);

4.8. section 18AA is amended so that – 4.8.1. an applicant for bail need not establish ‘new facts and circumstances’ before making a second application for bail; and 4.8.2. an applicant for bail who is vulnerable (for instance, by virtue of being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, a child, or a vulnerable adult as these terms are defined in sections 3 & 3AAAA, respectively, of the Bail Act) need not establish ‘new facts and circumstances’ before making any subsequent application for bail;

4.9. section 3A is amended to include more guidance to bail decision makers about the procedural and substantive matters to be considered to ensure application of the section gives effect to the purposes for which it was inserted, including to address the persistent over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system;

4.10. revision of section 3A should occur in a manner that is consistent with principles of self-determination of First Nations peoples;

4.11. section 4E(1)(a)(ii) is amended to narrow the scope of commit ‘offence’ while on bail;

4.12. before a bail decision maker refuses bail to an Aboriginal person, they are required by law to articulate (and record) what enquiries were made into the surrounding circumstances and what factors relevant to sections s3A and s3AAA of the Bail Act were considered to reach the decision;

4.13. bail decision makers intending to refuse an application for bail are required by law to make all necessary enquiries about, and where necessary note on any remand warrant, any potential custody management issues.

In *Runacres v The Coroners Court of Victoria* [2024] VSC 304 Quigley J subsequently dismissed an appeal by Dr Sean Runacres seeking to quash certain adverse findings made against him by Coroner McGregor with respect to the circumstances of Veronica’s death.

### **9.0.3 The Bail Amendment Act 2023 (as from 25/03/2024)**

**The legislation discussed in section 9.0.3 came into operation on 25/03/2024 but was partly amended on 02/12/2024 as discussed in discussed in section 9.0.4.**

Partly in response to findings of Coroner McGregor in *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* [Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023] a large number of amendments to the ***Bail Act 1977*** [**BA**] are contained in the ***Bail Amendment Act 2023*** [**BAA**]. The **BAA** received the Royal Assent on 24/10/2023. Its default commencement date is 25/03/2024 **[s.2 BAA]**.

The **main purposes** of the **BAA** are to amend the **BA** by—

* 1. [**MAKING CHANGES TO THE TESTS TO BE APPLIED BY BAIL DECISION MAKERS**](#_1._Changes_to), including—

**A1 providing that bail is not to be refused in respect of certain summary offences**, subject to certain exceptions **[ss.9-11 BAA]**;

**A2 modifying the operation of the reverse onus** **‘exceptional circumstances’ and ‘show compelling reason’ tests** by reducing the number of persons caught by the ‘uplift’ provisions of **items 1 & 30 of Schedule 2 [s.8(2) BAA]** except in the case of persons falling within **s.25 BAA**;

**A3** **amending the ‘unacceptable risk’ test [ss.12-15 BAA]**;

* 1. [**MAKING CHANGES TO WHAT BAIL DECISION MAKERS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT**](#_2._Changes_to), including amendments to—

**B1** considerations concerning **Aboriginal persons [ss.31-34 BAA]**;

**B2** considerations concerning **children [s.35 BAA]**;

**B3** the definition of ‘**surrounding circumstances**’ **[ss.36-38 BAA]**;

* 1. [**REPEALING THE TWO BAIL OFFENCES**](#_3._Repeal_of) of contravening certain conduct conditions and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail **[ss.39-40 BAA]**;
  2. [**EXPANDING THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE A PERSON MAY MAKE A** **FURTHER BAIL APPLICATION**](#_D._Expanding_circumstances) **[s.115 BAA]**;
  3. [**MAKING WIDESPREAD TERMINOLOGY CHANGES**](#_5._Making_widespread) **[ss.42-109 BAA]**, including—
* replacing ‘**surety**’ with ‘**bail guarantee**’ or ‘**bail guarantor**’;
* replacing “gendered language” with “gender neutral language”;
* mostly replacing ‘**undertaking**’ with ‘**bail undertaking**’;
  1. [**REQUIRING A REVIEW OF THE OPERATION**](#_6._Making_certain) **OF THE AMENDMENTS MADE BY THE BAA** **[s.116A BAA]**;
  2. [**MAKING CERTAIN ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS**](#_6._Making_certain).

## **A. CHANGES TO TESTS TO BE APPLIED BY BAIL DECISION MAKERS**

**A1 Offences in respect of which bail must not be refused**

Designed to prohibit remand for certain minor offences, new **s.4AAA** **BA** **[s.9 BAA]** provides:

1. Despite anything to the contrary in any other provision of this Act, a bail decision maker who is deciding whether to grant bail to a person accused of an offence must not refuse bail if—
2. the person is accused only of offences against the **Summary Offences Act 1966** that are not referred to in **Schedule 3**; and
3. the person does not have a terrorism record; and
4. if the bail decision maker is a court, no exception under subsection (2) applies.

(2) An exception applies for the purposes of subsection (1)(c) if—

1. the court has determined under section 8AA that there is a risk that the person will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence; or
2. the person was previously granted bail in respect of any of the offences of which the person is accused and that bail was subsequently revoked.

(3) A reference in this Act to a bail decision maker considering, deciding or determining whether to grant bail (however described) includes a reference to a bail decision maker who is prohibited from refusing bail by subsection (1).

(4) Nothing in this section limits the power of a court to revoke bail.

Similar amendments are made by **s.10 BAA** to **s.12B** **BA** (Persons subject to a summons to answer to a charge).

New **BA Schedule 3** **[s.11 BAA]** sets out the 13 offences against provisions of the ***Summary Offences Act 1966*** that are exceptions to the general prohibition against refusing bail contained in new **s.4AAA** **BA**. These are:

1. Section 19(1)—Sexual exposure
2. Section 23—Common assault
3. Sections 24(1) or 24(2)—Aggravated assault
4. Section 41A—Observation of genital or anal region
5. Section 41H(2)—Food or drink spiking
6. Section 41K(1)—Public display of Nazi symbols
7. Sections 51(2), 51(3) or 51(4)—Assaulting etc emergency workers, custodial officers, youth justice custodial workers or local authority staff on duty
8. Sections 51A(1) or 51A(2)—Assaulting registered health practitioners
9. Section 52A—Harass witness etc

plus offences under sections 41B, 41C, 41DA(1) or 41DB(1) as in force before their repeal.

**A2 Modifying the operation of the reverse onus ‘exceptional circumstances’ and ‘show compelling reason’ tests**

The following ‘uplift’ items are deleted from **BA Schedule 2** by **s.8(2) BAA**:

1. An indictable offence that is alleged to have been committed by the accused–
2. while on bail for another indictable offence; or
3. while subject to a summons to answer to a charge for another indictable offence; or
4. while at large awaiting trial; for another indictable offence; or
5. during the period of a community correction order made in respect of the accused for another indictable offence or while otherwise serving a sentence for another indictable offence; or
6. while released under a parole order.
7. An offence against the **BA**.

However, **s.4AA(2)(c) BA** – as amended by **s.25 BAA** – has the effect of retaining the contents of item 1 repealed from Schedule 2 – as well as adding paragraphs (iiia) & (iiib) which appear to have been accidentally omitted – but limiting each paragraph to a prior Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence rather than any prior indictable offence. Section 4AA(2)(c) **BA** now provides that the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test also applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence if the offence is alleged to have been committed by the accused–

1. while on bail **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or
2. while subject to a summons to answer to a charge **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or
3. while at large awaiting trial **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or

(iiia) **while on remand** **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or

(iiib) **while at large awaiting sentence** **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or

1. during the period of a community correction order made in respect of the accused **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or
2. while otherwise serving a sentence **for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**; or
3. while released under a parole order made in respect of **any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence**.

**Section 4AA BA** is additionally slightly amended by **s.26(2) BAA** to add **s.4AA(5)** which provides that an accused released on an undertaking under s.72 or s.75 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* is not at large awaiting sentence and is not serving a sentence for the purposes of s.4AA(2)(c) **BA**. This new s.4AA(5) reverses the contrary interpretation of Weinberg JA in *Application for Bail by Allen Matemberere* [2018] VSC 762 and of Kaye J in *WBM v Chief Commissioner of Police* (2010) 27 VR 469, 475.

The modification of these ‘uplift’ provisions is likely to cause at least some reduction in the number of persons currently ‘uplifted’ to an ‘exceptional circumstances’ test by operation of **Schedule 2** and **s.4AA(2)(c) BA**.

In addition **BA Schedule 1 and Schedule 2** are both amended by addition of an item which provides:

Any other offence the necessary elements of which consist of elements that constitute an offence referred to in any other item of this Schedule.

However, the heading to **Division 7 BAA** makes it clear that these new items in **ss.27-28 BAA** are intended to refer to historical offences corresponding to the offences listed in the respective Schedules.

In the original version of the *Bail Amendment Bill 2023* a new separate child bail model was contained in a proposed **s.4AAB BA** but that section is not contained in the **BAA** as subsequently passed.

**A3 Amendments to the ‘unacceptable risk’ test**

**Section 4E** **BA** – headed **“All offences–unacceptable risk test”** – is amended by **s.14 BAA** by combining parts of the first two of the current four alternative tests. This new limb provides that a bail decision maker must refuse bail if satisfied that the accused, if released on bail, would–

* endanger the safety or welfare of any **other** person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means.

The same amendment is made by **s.15BAA** to the conduct conditions in **s.5AAA(1)(a) & (b) BA**.

It follows that the current limb of unacceptable risk that the person would “commit an offence while on bail” will no longer be a bar to the granting of bail unless such an offence would also endanger the safety or welfare of any **other** person. The amendment appears intended to prevent a remand based only on an unacceptable risk of further minor offending which does not endanger the safety or welfare of another person. The Explanatory Memorandum states at p.8: “Endangering the safety or welfare of another person does not require that the accused person be found to pose an unacceptable risk of committing a violent or sexual offence. For example, a bail decision maker may be satisfied that a risk of property-based offending meets the unacceptable risk threshold if the commission of such an offence would endanger the safety and welfare of any person, whether that is a particular individual, or any person in the community.”

Further the addition of the word “**other**” in this new limb makes it clear that a person cannot be denied bail on the ground that there is an unacceptable risk that the person would endanger their own safety or welfare.

The other two limbs in **s.4E(1)(a)** are unchanged, namely that a bail decision maker must refuse bail if satisfied that there is an unacceptable risk that the accused, if released on bail, would–

* interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or
* fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail.

But compare **s.5AAA(1)(d) BA** which has been amended by **s.92 BAA** to provide that a bail decision maker considering the release of an accused on bail must impose any condition that will reduce the likelihood that the accused may “fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the ~~conditions of bail~~ **bail undertaking**”. Cf. also amended ss.24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(3)(a), 24(3)(b), 26(2), 27(1) & 30(1) **BA**.

**Section 4D** **BA** – headed **“When unacceptable risk test applies”** – is substituted by **s.13 BAA**:

A bail decision maker must apply the unacceptable risk test—

1. on s.4A(4) or 4C(4) requiring the bail decision maker to move to the step 2—unacceptable risk test; or
2. on a decision of whether to grant bail to which, under section 4AA, neither the step 1—exceptional circumstances test nor the step 1—show compelling reason test applies.

It may be easier to describe the effect of **s.4D** **BA** by simply saying that the unacceptable risk test applies in any bail application which has not already failed a reverse onus test (if applicable) or where it is the sole bail test in a case where no step 1 test applies.

## **B. CHANGES TO WHAT BAIL DECISION MAKERS MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT**

**B1 Changes to considerations concerning Aboriginal persons**

**Section 3A** **BA** – headed **“Determination in relation to an Aboriginal person”** – is substituted by **s.33 BAA** which–

* substantially rewords, updates and strengthens the current considerations; and
* imposes a new obligation detailed in **s.3A(5)** on a bail decision maker who has refused bail to an Aboriginal person to identify the issues in **s.3A(1)** to which regard has been had.

1. In making a determination under this Act in relation to an Aboriginal person, a bail decision maker must take into account (in addition to any other requirements of this Act) any issues that arise due to the person’s Aboriginality, including the following—
2. the historical and ongoing discriminatory systemic factors that have resulted in Aboriginal people being over-represented in the criminal justice system, including in the remand population;
3. the risk of harm and trauma that being in custody poses to Aboriginal people;
4. the importance of maintaining and supporting the development of the person's connection to culture, kinship, family, Elders, country and community;
5. any issues that arise in relation to the person's history, culture or circumstances, including the following—
6. the impact of any experience of trauma and intergenerational trauma, including abuse, neglect, loss and family violence;
7. any experience of out of home care, including foster care and residential care;
8. any experience of social or economic disadvantage, including homelessness and unstable housing;
9. any ill health the person experiences, including mental illness;
10. any disability the person has, including physical disability, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment;
11. any caring responsibilities the person has, including as the sole or primary parent of an Aboriginal child;
12. any other relevant cultural issue or obligation.

**Note**: If the Aboriginal person is also a child, the bail decision maker must also take into account the issues set out in section 3B(1).

1. The bail decision maker is to take account of an issue set out in subsection (1) by reference to the evidence and information that is reasonably available to the bail decision maker at the time, including information provided by—
2. the Aboriginal person’s family and community; and
3. providers of Aboriginal bail support services.
4. Despite subsection (2), the bail decision maker is to take account of the issues set out in subsection (1)(a) to (c) whether or not any evidence or information is before the bail decision maker in respect of those issues.
5. The requirement to take an issue set out in subsection (1) into account applies regardless of—
6. whether the person’s connection to their Aboriginality and culture has been intermittent throughout their life; and
7. whether the person has only recently connected to or discovered their culture or heritage; and
8. when the person first discloses that they are an Aboriginal person.
9. If a bail decision maker refuses bail to an Aboriginal person, the bail decision maker must—
10. identify the matters the bail decision maker had regard to in taking into account the issues set out in subsection (1); and
11. either—
12. state those matters orally when refusing bail and ensure that an audio visual recording, or an audio recording, is made of that statement; or
13. record those matters in writing in a form that the bail decision maker considers appropriate.

**Notes**:

1. Section 19(2) of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities provides that Aboriginal persons hold distinct cultural rights and must not be denied the various rights referred to in that provision.
2. When considering bail for an Aboriginal person charged with a Commonwealth offence, a bail decision maker must comply with section 15AB(1)(b) of the Crimes Act 1914 of the Commonwealth.

In **s.3** **BA** the following definition is inserted by **s.31 BAA**:

***Aboriginal bail support service*** means a bail support service that is provided by an entity that—

1. is managed by Aboriginal people; or
2. operates for the benefit of Aboriginal people.

**Section 5AAA** **BA** details various conduct conditions which a bail decision maker may impose to reduce the likelihood of the accused person endangering another person, interfering with a witness or failing to surrender into custody. One such condition in **s.5AAA(4)(g) BA** is “attendance and participation in a bail support service”. A new **s.5AAA(4A)** is added by **s.34(2) BAA**, providing:

If a bail decision maker is imposing a condition referred to in subsection (4)(g), and the accused is an Aboriginal person, the bail decision maker must take into account that it is important for the bail support services that Aboriginal people attend and participate in to be Aboriginal bail support services where that is appropriate, and where such services are available.

**Note**: In making a determination under this Act in relation to an Aboriginal person, a bail decision maker must take into account the issues set out in section 3A(1).

**B2 Changes to considerations concerning children**

**Section 3B(1)** **BA** – headed **“Determination in relation to a child”** – is substituted by **s.35 BAA** by the following which rewords and strengthens the current considerations and adds considerations (a), (c), (h), (j), (k) & (l):

1. In making a determination under this Act in relation to a child, a bail decision maker must take into account (in addition to any other requirements of this Act) the following issues—
2. the child’s age, maturity and stage of development at the time of the alleged offence;
3. the need to impose on the child the minimum intervention required in the circumstances, with the remand of the child being a last resort;
4. the presumption at common law that a child who is 10 years of age or over but under 14 years of age cannot commit an offence;
5. the need to preserve and strengthen the child's relationships with—
6. the child's parents, guardian and carers; and
7. other significant persons in the child's life;
8. the importance of supporting the child to live at home or in safe, stable and secure living arrangements in the community;
9. the importance—
10. of supporting the child to engage in education, or in training or work; and
11. of that engagement being subject only to minimal interruption or disturbance;
12. the need to minimise the stigma to the child resulting from being remanded;
13. the fact that time in custody has been shown to pose criminogenic and other risks for children, including—
14. a risk that the child will become further involved in the criminal justice system; and
15. a risk of harm;
16. the need to ensure that the conditions of bail—
17. are no more onerous than is necessary; and
18. do not constitute unfair management of the child;
19. the fact that some cohorts of children, including the following cohorts, experience discrimination resulting in that cohort’s over-representation in the criminal justice system—
20. Aboriginal children;
21. children involved in the child protection system;
22. children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
23. whether, if the child were found guilty of the offence charged, it is likely—
24. that the child would be sentenced to a term of imprisonment; and
25. if so, that the time the child would spend remanded in custody if bail is refused would exceed that term of imprisonment;
26. any of the following issues that arise—
27. any ill health the child experiences, including mental illness;
28. any disability the child has, including physical disability, intellectual disability, cognitive impairment and developmental delay;
29. the impact on the child, and on the child’s behaviour, of any experience of abuse, trauma, neglect, loss, family violence or child protection involvement, including removal from family or placement in out of home care;
30. any other relevant factor or characteristic.

**Note**: If the child is also an Aboriginal person, the bail decision maker must also take into account the issues set out in section 3A(1).

(1A) The bail decision maker is to take account of an issue set out in subsection (1) by reference to the evidence and information that is reasonably available to the bail decision maker at the time.

(1B) Despite subsection (1A), the bail decision maker is to take account of the issues set out in subsection (1)(b) to (j) whether or not any evidence or information is before the bail decision maker in respect of those issues.

**B3 Amendments to the definition of ‘surrounding circumstances’**

**Section 3AAA** **BA** contains a non-exhaustive list of matters that a bail decision maker must take into account (where relevant) if the **BA** requires the decision maker to take into account the ‘**surrounding circumstances**’. An additional matter (aa) is added, two sub-matters are added to (e), matter (h) is substituted and a Note is added to matter (i). The provisions amended by **ss.36-38 BAA** are as follows:

(aa) whether, if the accused were found guilty of the offence with which the accused is charged, it is likely—

1. that the accused would be sentenced to a term of imprisonment; and
2. if so, that the time the accused would spend remanded in custody if bail is refused would exceed that term of imprisonment.

(e) whether, at the time of the alleged offending, the accused—

(iiia) was on remand for another offence; or

(iiib) was at large awaiting sentence for another offence; or

(h) any special vulnerability of the accused, including—

1. being an Aboriginal person; or
2. being a child; or
3. experiencing any ill health, including mental illness; or
4. having a disability, including physical disability, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment.

**Note**: The bail decision maker is required to take certain issues into account if the accused is an Aboriginal person—see section 3A. Further, the bail decision maker is required to take certain issues into account if the accused is a child—see section 3B. The bail decision maker is required to take all these issues into account if the accused is both an Aboriginal person and a child.

(i) the availability of treatment or bail support services;

**Note**: If the accused is an Aboriginal person, see also section 5AAA(4A).

## **C. REPEALING TWO BAIL OFFENCES**

### The following two bail offences are repealed by **ss.39 & 40 BAA**:

* **Section 30A**—Offence to contravene certain conduct conditions;
* **Section 30B**—Offence to commit indictable offence whilst on bail.

A consequential amendment in **s.41 BAA** repeals **s.32A** **BA** which allowed an infringement notice to be served in certain circumstances on a person believed to have committed an offence against s.30A.

The offence of failure to answer bail provided by **s.30** **BA** has not been repealed.

## **D. EXPANDING THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE A PERSON MAY MAKE A FURTHER BAIL APPLICATION**

### **Sections 18 & 18AA BA** set out the circumstances in which a person may make a further application for bail where bail has been refused or revoked.

### **Section 18AA(1)** – headed **“Certain circumstances required before application may be heard”** – is amended by **s.115 BAA** to include s.18AA(1)(aa) which gives an accused the right to make a second bail application to a court without being required to show new facts and circumstances:

1. A court must not hear an application under section 18 unless—

**(aa) the application is the first or second instance of the applicant applying to a court for bail (whether under section 18 or otherwise) since being taken into custody; or**

1. the applicant satisfies the court that new facts or circumstances have arisen since the refusal or revocation of bail; or
2. the applicant was not represented by a legal practitioner when bail was refused or revoked; or
3. the order refusing or revoking bail was made by a bail justice.

The Explanatory Memorandum notes at p.37: “The purpose of this amendment is to provide that an applicant for bail will not have to satisfy the court of ‘new facts and circumstances’ (as provided for in section 18AA(1)(a)) when making an application for bail that is the second application following refusal or revocation of bail. This means that all accused people will be entitled to 2 bail applications before a court following arrest, both of which can be legally represented. The new provision is intended to encourage represented bail applications at the earliest opportunity.”

## **E. MAKING WIDESPREAD TERMINOLOGY CHANGES**

These terminology changes include—

* “**surety**” is replaced by “**bail guarantee**” or “**bail guarantor**” **[see ss.42-70 & 109 BAA]**;
* ‘gendered language’ is replaced by ‘gender neutral language’ **[see ss.71-89 BAA]**;
* “**undertaking of bail**” is mostly replaced by “**bail undertaking**” **[see ss.90-108 BAA]** which is newly defined in **s.90(1) BAA** as “an undertaking given under section 5(1)”, namely “to surrender into custody at the time and place of the hearing or trial specified in the undertaking and not to depart without leave of the court and, if leave is given, to return at the time specified by the court and again surrender into custody”.

It is clear from amended s.5(1) and s.5AAA(1)(d) – plus the latter’s Explanatory Memorandum – that “the requirement to surrender arises under the bail undertaking itself and not under the conditions of bail”. See also ss.24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(3)(a), 24(3)(b), 26(2), 27(1) & 30(1) **BA**. Note, however, that unaccountably s.4E(1)(a)(iv) **BA** has not been amended and provides “fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail”.

Further, ‘**bail undertaking**’ does not encompass the **undertaking** to produce the child at court referred to in **s.16B BA** which may be given by a child’s parent or some other person if the bail decision maker considers that the child does not have the capacity or understanding to give a bail undertaking.

Although these terminology changes are not substantive, they are substantial and they have also led to amendments – by the *Bail Amendment Regulations 2024* – to a number of the 21 prescribed Forms in Schedule 1 of the ***Bail Regulations 2022***.

## **F.** [**REQUIRING A REVIEW OF THE OPERATION**](#_6._Making_certain) **OF THE AMENDMENTS MADE BY THE BAA**

New **s.32C BA** requires the Attorney-General to cause a review to be conducted of the operation of the amendments made to the **BA** by the **BAA** **[see s.116A BAA]**.

## **G. MAKING ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATIONS**

Six noteworthy additional clarifications are—

* The following new definitions have been inserted into **s.3 BA** by **s.29 BAA**–
* “***step 1 – exceptional circumstances test***–see section 4A;
* ***step 1 – show compelling reason test***–see section 4B;
* ***step 1 test*** means–(a) the step 1–exceptional circumstances test; or (b) the step 1–compelling reason test;
* ***step 2 – unacceptable risk test***–see section 4D”.
* The four flow-charts in **s.3D BA** have been replaced by the five in **s.30 BAA**.
* New **s.8(1)(aa) BA** – inserted by **s.113(1) BAA** – provides that in any proceedings with respect to bail “the bail decision maker is not bound by the rules of evidence”. The Explanatory Memorandum notes at p.36 that this “is intended to clarify rather than change the existing law regarding the application of the rules of evidence to bail proceedings.”
* **Section 12** **BA** is headed **“Power of court to grant or refuse bail”**. **Section 12(3)** provides: “The court, in accordance with this Act, may grant or refuse bail.” **New s.12(3AA)** is added by **s.114 BAA**, making it clear that a court may allow a person to go at large without granting bail:

Additionally, the court may allow the person to go at large if—

1. the court considers it appropriate to do so; and
2. the court is not required to refuse bail.

* A requirement for the applicant to provide a bail guarantee or a deposit of money is a condition of bail. This is clear from **s.5(2)** **BA** as amended by **s.91(3) BAA** which provides:

(2) A grant of bail may be subject to—

1. conduct conditions; or
2. a condition that requires one or more bail guarantees or a deposit of money of a specified amount (whether or not the grant of bail is also subject to conduct conditions)—

but does not need to be subject to any of these conditions.

This is also clear from the Explanatory Memorandum which says at p.32 in relation to **s.91 BAA**: “The new section 5(2) has the same practical effect as the current section, but uses updated terminology and simpler, more direct language.”

* The note to **section 346(6) of the** ***Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*** – which lists seven provisions of the **BA** that are particular to children – is amended by **s.117 BAA** by the addition of a concluding paragraph: “Additionally, section 3A [of the BA] (determination in relation to an Aboriginal person) applies if the child is an Aboriginal person.”

**The amended legislation discussed in this section has also been included in the relevant sections of this Chapter.**

### **[9.0.4 Amendments to the Bail Act in 2024 & 2025](#_9.0.3_The_Bail)**

## **AMENDMENTS COMMENCING ON 11/09/2024**

### These amendments were made by ss.903D, 903E, 903G & 904 of the *Youth Justice Act 2024* and apply to both adult and child accused.

### **ss.4E(1) & 5AAA(1) BA** were amended by the inclusion of Examples.

### **s.18AE(1A)** was added to the section empowering the informant or the Director of Public Prosecutions to apply for revocation of bail granted to a person. Section **18AE(1) BA** provides:

(1A) Without limiting subsection (1), an application under that subsection may be made because the applicant believes on reasonable grounds that the person—

1. has committed an offence since bail was granted; or
2. is likely to commit an offence whilst on bail; or
3. has breached a condition of bail; or
4. is likely to breach a condition of bail or the bail undertaking.

## **AMENDMENTS COMMENCING ON 02/12/2024**

### These amendments were made by ss.903A, 903B & 903C of the *Youth Justice Act 2024* and apply to both adult and child accused.

### **s.4E(1)** was further amended – with amendments shaded and Examples not shown – to provide:

A bail decision maker must refuse bail for a person accused of any offence if the bail decision maker is satisfied that—

### there is a risk that the accused would, if released on bail—

### (iaa) commit a Schedule 1 or a Schedule 2 offence; or

### otherwise endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means;

### ...

### interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or

### fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail; and

### the risk is an unacceptable risk.

### **s.5AAA(1)** was further amended – with amendments shaded and Examples not shown – to provide:

A bail decision maker considering the release of an accused on bail must impose any condition that, in the opinion of the bail decision maker, will reduce the likelihood that the accused may—

### commit a Schedule 1 offence or a Schedule 2 offence; or

### otherwise endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or

### ...

### interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or

### fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the bail undertaking.

### a new offence was created by addition of **s.30A** **BA** which provides:

### An accused on bail must not commit a Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence while on bail. Penalty: 30 penalty units or 3 months imprisonment.

### 

## **AMENDMENTS COMMENCING ON 26/03/2025**

A primary purpose of the *Bail Amendment Act 2025* [**BAA**] is to amend the first of the four Guiding Principles in **s.1B BA** to read: “The Parliament recognises the overarching importance of maximising, to the greatest extent possible, the safety of the community and persons affected by crime.” See **s.1B(1AA) BA; s.4(1) BAA**.

The **BAA** was passed by Parliament on 20/03/2025. It received the Royal Assent on 25/03/2025. All sections other than **ss.11 & 12 BAA** have been in operation since 26/03/2025. **Sections 11 & 12 BAA** will come into operation on 29/09/2025 if not proclaimed to commence earlier. The amendments contained in **ss.11 & 12 BAA** will be included in the relevant sections of this **Chapter** when they commence operation.

The purposes and effects of **BAA** are listed in **s.1** and may be summarised as follows:

1. [**AMENDMENTS TO THE BAIL ACT 1977**](#_1._Changes_to):
   * + 1. To clarify that the **BA**’s overarching guiding principle is to maximise, to the greatest extent possible, the safety of the community and persons affected by crime: **s.1B(1AA) BA; s.4(1) BAA**. In *Re Alsowafi* [2025] VSC 162 the applicant gave notice of a bail application on 11/03/2025. The bail application was actually made on 31/03/2025 after **s.1B(1AA) BA** came into effect on 26/03/2025. Relying on dicta of Fox J in *Re Tiburcy* [2024] VSC 163, Beale J disagreed with the parties’ contrary position and held that **s.1B(1AA) BA** did apply to the applicant’s application.
       2. To amend **s.3B(1)(b) BA** – one of the matters which must be taken into account in making a bail determination in relation to a child – to read: “the need to impose on the child the minimum intervention required in the circumstances, with the remand of the child being a last resort”: **s.5 BAA**. The other 11 matters in **s.3B(1) BA** remain unchanged.
       3. To amend **s.24(2) BA** to provide that a person who is arrested while on bail may, in certain circumstances, be brought by a police officer before a court rather than a bail justice: **s.6 BAA**.
       4. To repeal the offence of committing a Schedule 1 offence or a Schedule 2 offence while on bail [**s.30A BA**] and replace it with a new offence of committing an indictable offence while on bail [**s.30B BA**]: **ss.7 & 8 BAA**.
       5. To provide that the operation of the amendments made by **BAA** is to be part of the subject of the Attorney-General’s review in 2027 for which **s.32C BA** provides: **s.9 BAA**.
       6. To move to **Schedule 1 BA** – listing offences for which the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test applies – the offences of armed robbery [**s.75A Crimes Act 1958**], aggravated burglary [**s.77 CA**], home invasion [**s.77A CA**] and carjacking [**s.79 CA**]: **s.11 BAA**. **NOT YET IN OPERATION**
       7. To make 13 additions and one amendment to the offences in **Schedule 2 BA** for which the ‘compelling reason’ test applies: **s.12 BAA**. **NOT YET IN OPERATION**

To add to **Schedule 3 BA** – which contains the list of exceptions to the prohibition on refusing bail referred to in **ss.4AAA(1) & 12B(2A) BA** – the new offence against **s.49F Summary Offences Act 1966**: **s.13 BAA**.

1. [**AMENDMENT TO THE SUMMARY OFFENCES ACT 1966**](#_1._Changes_to) **ss.14 & 15 BAA**: A new summary offence is provided by **s.49F SOA** – **Contravening certain conduct conditions of bail undertakings**. The maximum penalty is 30 penalty units or IMP3m. However it does not apply to a child. It also does not apply to a conduct condition that requires the accused to attend and participate in bail support services. This new offence may be the subject of an infringement notice under **s.60AA(1) SOA**.
2. [**CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE FISHERIES ACT 1995 & YOUTH JUSTICE ACT 2024**](#_1._Changes_to): **ss.16 & 17 BAA**.

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## **9.1 Child in custody**

The following table lists those provisions of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* [No.96/2005] [as amended] ['**CYFA**'] and the *Bail Act 1977* [No.9008] [as amended] [‘**BA**’] which set out the duties & powers of the arresting police officer, a court and a bail justice in relation to a child who is in custody.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTION** | **ACTION WHERE ACCUSED CHILD IS IN CUSTODY** |
| **CYFA**/  **s.346(2)** | If a child is arrested and taken into custody by a police officer, the child must be–  (a) released unconditionally [with or without being charged]; or  (b) released on bail by a sergeant of police or officer in charge of a police station [**BA**/s.10]; or  (c) brought before the Children’s Court [in this connection see the discussion of the Children’s Court Weekend Online Remand Court {WORC} in **section 2.5.3**]; or  (d) if the Court is not sitting at any convenient venue, brought before a bail justice–  within a reasonable time but not later than 24 hours after being taken into custody. |
| **CYFA/**  **s.346(3)** | If bail may only be granted to a child by a court [**BA**/s.13] s.346(2) does not apply and the child must be brought before the court as soon as practicable and-   * no later than the next working day after being taken into custody; or * if the proper venue of the Court is in a region of the State prescribed under the **CYFA**, within 2 working days. |
| **BA/**  **s.12(4)(a)** | If a court refuses bail to a child, the court must not remand the child in custody for longer than 21 clear days. |
| **BA/**  **s.10A(6)** | If a bail justice refuses bail to a child, the bail justice must remand the child in custody to appear before a court-   * on the next working day or within 2 working days if next day not practicable; or * if the proper venue of the Court is in a region of the State prescribed under the **CYFA**, within 2 working days. |
| **BA/s.12(5)**  **FURTHER**  **REMAND** | If a child in custody is brought before a court on the expiry of a period of remand in custody, the court must not remand the child in custody for a further period longer than 21 days. This power is not restricted to one further remand but applies to any number of further remands. |

### **9.1.1 Prescribed regions for 2 day bail justice remand**

Regulation 23(1) & Schedule 3 of the Children, Youth and Families Regulations 2017 [S.R. No.19/2017] lists 48 councils, covering the whole of rural & regional Victoria, whose municipal districts are prescribed regions for the purposes of 2 day bail justice remands under s.10A(6)(b)(ii) of the **BA**.

### **9.1.2 Placement of remanded child**

If a child is remanded in custody by a court or a bail justice, s.347(1) of the **CYFA** and reg.23 & Sch.3 of the Children, Youth and Families Regulations 2017 provide that the child must be placed:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (i) | in a remand centre; | The remand centres established under ss.3 & 478(a) of the **CYFA** are:   * Cherry Creek Youth Justice Precinct – Males aged 15 and over * Parkville Youth Justice Precinct – Males aged 15-18 * Parkville Youth Justice Precinct – Males aged 10-14 * Parkville Youth Justice Precinct – Females aged 10-17 |
| **THE COURT HAS NO POWER TO DIRECT IN WHICH CENTRE A CHILD IS TO BE PLACED** |
| (ii) | in a prescribed region of the State, in a police gaol or other suitable place if the period of remand is not more than 2 working days. | Regulation 23(1) & Schedule 3 of the Children, Youth and Families Regulations 2017 [S.R. No.19/2007] lists 48 councils, covering the whole of rural and regional Victoria, whose municipal districts are prescribed regions for the purposes of s.347(1) of the **CYFA**. Special rules governing the detention of children in police gaols are set out in s.347(2) of the **CYFA**. Section 347(3) provides that it is the responsibility of the Chief Commissioner of Police to make sure that s.347(2) is complied with. |

### **9.1.3 Breach of Children’s Court sentencing order**

Section 420 of the **CYFA** provides, in effect, that a person who:

* has been arrested in accordance with a warrant issued; or
* has appeared before the Court in answer to a notice to appear served-

in respect of an alleged breach of a Children’s Court sentencing order may be remanded or bailed and the **BA** applies, subject to s.346 of the CYFA, as if the person was an accused person. The use of the word “person” makes it clear that s.420 applies to a person alleged to have breached a Children’s Court sentencing order, whether or not the person is still a child within the meaning of the definition of “child” in s.3(1) of the CYFA. This is consistent with the procedures set out in the respective breach provisions in ss.366, 371, 384, 392 & 408 of the CYFA.

Because s.420 is expressed to be subject to s.346 and the **BA**, the 21 day maximum remand period referred to in s.420(2) only applies to remand by the Court. The maximum period of remand by a bail justice is until the next working day or, if the proper venue is in a prescribed region of the State, not later than the second working day: see s.10A(6) of the **BA**; see also *LD v Victoria Police* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, December 1996] per Hampel J.

## **9.2 Bail – Legislation**

### **9.2.1 Differences between child & adult**

Section 346(6) of the **CYFA** provides that, to the extent that it is not inconsistent with s.346, the Bail Act 1977 [‘**BA**’] applies to an application for bail by a child. Most of the former provisions of s.346 have been transferred into the **BA** by the *Bail Amendment Act 2016*. However, the amended **BA** does create some additional significant differences between adults and children:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTION** | **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHILD & ADULT APPLICANT** |
| **BA**/s.3B(1) | Additional considerations which a bail decision maker must take into account in making a determination under the **BA** in relation to a child [see **section 9.2.2** below]. |
| **BA**/s.3B(2) | In making a determination under the **BA** in relation to a child, a bail decision maker may take into account any recommendation or information contained in a report provided by a bail support service [see **section 9.5.16** below].. |
| **BA**/s.3B(3) | Bail must not be refused to a child on the sole ground that the child does not have any, or any adequate, accommodation. |
| **BA/**s.5AA(2) | The Court, at the first hearing following the grant of bail at which the child is present, must ensure that conditions of bail for a child imposed by a bail justice, police officer, sheriff or person authorised under s.115(5) of the *Fines Reform Act 2014* comply with-   * **BA**/s.5AAA(2)(a) [i.e. must be no more onerous than is required to achieve the purposes of **BA**/s.5AAA(1) re attendance, not reoffending, not endangering public safety or welfare and not interfering with witnesses or otherwise obstructing the course of justice]; bail conditions fixed by a police officer in January 2014 that the accused “may have access to laptop between 6pm & 9pm provided he performs regular household chores including vacuuming house, keeping room clean, taking rubbish out as directed by dad” and “do dishes every night” would fail this test; * **BA**/s.5AAA(2)(b) [i.e. must be reasonable having regard to the nature of the alleged offence and the circumstances of the accused]; and * **BA**/s.5AAA(2)(c) [i.e. must, subject to s.5AAA(3), be consistent with each condition of a family violence intervention order, safety notice or recognised DVO to which the accused is subject]. |
| **BA/**s.5AA(3) | The Court may make any variations to the conditions of bail necessary for the purposes of **BA**/s.5AA(2). |
| **BA**/s.10(3)  & s.10(4) | If a police officer, sheriff or person authorised under s.115(5) of the *Fines Reform Act 2014* considers whether to grant bail to a child under s.10 of the **BA**, the bail decision maker must ensure that a parent or guardian of the child or an independent person is present during the proceeding. Such independent person may take steps to facilitate the granting of bail, for example by arranging accommodation. |
| **BA**/s.10A(3)  & s.10A(4) | A bail justice who is considering an application for bail in respect of a child must ensure that a parent or guardian of the child or an independent person is present during the hearing of the application. Such independent person may take steps to facilitate the granting of bail, for example by arranging accommodation. |
| **BA**/s.10A(6)  & s.12(4)(a) | Maximum remand periods (detailed above) are different for a child. |
| **BA**/s.10AA | These provisions do not apply to a child, a vulnerable person or an Aboriginal person. |
| **BA**/s.12(5) | Maximum further remand period for a child re-remanded by the Court is 21 clear days. |
| **BA**/s.12B | This provision does not apply to the Children’s Court. |
| **BA**/s.13, 13A | Certain of these provisions do not apply to child, vulnerable person or Aboriginal. |
| **BA**/s.16B | If, in the opinion of a bail decision maker granting bail to a child, the child does not have the capacity or understanding to give a bail undertaking, the child may be released on bail if the child's parent or some other person enters into an undertaking...to produce the child at the venue of the court to which the hearing of the charge is adjourned or the court to which the child is committed for trial. |
| **BA**/s.24(3A) | Despite s.24(3) of the **BA**, the maximum period for which a court may remand a child arrested under s.24(1) in relation to a breach or likely breach of bail is 21 clear days. |

### **9.2.2 Additional considerations in bail determinations for children**

Section 3B(1) of the **BA** – introduced by the *Bail Amendment Act 2016* [No.1/2016] and reworded and strengthened by the *Bail Amendment Act 2023* – incorporates the very significant difference between bail determinations for a child and for an adult contained in recommendations 128 & 129 of the Law Reform Commission’s 2004 Review of the **BA**. As from 26/03/2025 ss.3B(1), 3B(1A) & 3B(1B) provide–

1. In making a determination under this Act in relation to a child, a bail decision maker must take into account (in addition to any other requirements of this Act) the following issues—
2. the child’s age, maturity and stage of development at the time of the alleged offence;
3. the need to impose on the child the minimum intervention required in the circumstances;
4. the presumption at common law that a child who is 10 years of age or over but under 14 years of age cannot commit an offence;
5. the need to preserve and strengthen the child's relationships with—
6. the child's parents, guardian and carers; and
7. other significant persons in the child's life;
8. the importance of supporting the child to live at home or in safe, stable and secure living arrangements in the community;
9. the importance—
10. of supporting the child to engage in education, or in training or work; and
11. of that engagement being subject only to minimal interruption or disturbance;
12. the need to minimise the stigma to the child resulting from being remanded;
13. the fact that time in custody has been shown to pose criminogenic and other risks for children, including—
14. a risk that the child will become further involved in the criminal justice system; and
15. a risk of harm;
16. the need to ensure that the conditions of bail—
17. are no more onerous than is necessary; and
18. do not constitute unfair management of the child;
19. the fact that some cohorts of children, including the following cohorts, experience discrimination resulting in that cohort’s over-representation in the criminal justice system—
20. Aboriginal children;
21. children involved in the child protection system;
22. children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
23. whether, if the child were found guilty of the offence charged, it is likely—
24. that the child would be sentenced to a term of imprisonment; and
25. if so, that the time the child would spend remanded in custody if bail is refused would exceed that term of imprisonment;
26. any of the following issues that arise—
27. any ill health the child experiences, including mental illness;
28. any disability the child has, including physical disability, intellectual disability, cognitive impairment and developmental delay;
29. the impact on the child, and on the child’s behaviour, of any experience of abuse, trauma, neglect, loss, family violence or child protection involvement, including removal from family or placement in out of home care;
30. any other relevant factor or characteristic.

**Note**: If the child is also an Aboriginal person, the bail decision maker must also take into account the issues set out in section 3A(1).

(1A) The bail decision maker is to take account of an issue set out in subsection (1) by reference to the evidence and information that is reasonably available to the bail decision maker at the time.

(1B) Despite subsection (1A), the bail decision maker is to take account of the issues set out in subsection (1)(b) to (j) whether or not any evidence or information is before the bail decision maker in respect of those issues.

Items (d), (e), (f) & (g) of s.3B(1) are in substantially similar terms to the sentencing considerations for a child contained respectively in ss.362(1)(a), (b), (c) & (d) of the **CYFA**.

Sections 3B(2) & 3B(3) of the **BA** provide:

1. In making a determination under this Act in relation to a child, a bail decision maker may take into account any recommendation or information contained in a report provided by a bail support service [as discussed in **section 9.5.17**].
2. Bail must not be refused to a child on the sole ground that the child does not have any, or any adequate, accommodation.

Commenting on s.3B in *Re SD* [2019] VSC 369, a case of a 17 year applicant, Lasry J said at [19]:

“This application highlights the significant tension that exists in these applications. On the one hand, the criminal law is doing everything it can to make allowances for the youth of an alleged offender and to give them the opportunity to pursue a prosocial lifestyle. On the other hand, the [MC] matter alleges very serious offending that is violent and random, and would be terrifying from the point of view of the victim and the community.”

In *Re E.A.* [2016] VSC 378 the applicant was a 17 year old boy of Sudanese descent who came to Australia with his parents via Egypt when he was 5. He was in a show cause situation, having been charged with a number of counts of aggravated burglary, intentionally causing injury and theft of motor vehicle arising from two separate home invasions in the company of 4 other young men on 23/04/2016. At the time he was on bail after a deferral of sentence on 06/04/2016 on similar serious charges. He was also on bail for affray said to have occurred at Federation Square on 12/04/2016. T Forrest J noted at [11]-[12] that he was required to take into account the seven considerations in s.3B(1) of the **BA** and that he was entitled, pursuant to s.3B(2) to take into account evidence of a proposed intensive bail support program which the applicant could be placed on if he was successful in obtaining bail. Factors supporting the application included “the applicant’s youth, his stable family background, his academic accomplishment (he is obviously a bright young man), and the Youth Justice Support”. In refusing bail, T Forrest J said at [16]-[18]:

“I consider that the applicant’s offending, if proven, is very serious, bordering upon grave. I consider that the submission (or foreshadowed submission) that time served (2 months’ detention) is sufficient to deal with the applicant’s criminality is misconceived.

...In my view, the applicant, despite his youth and **despite my earnest consideration of the factors in s.3B of the Act**, despite his lack of prior history and his sound family background, has failed to show the necessary cause. He was on two sets of bail at the time that he is alleged to have committed these offences. The conditions that were attached to those grants of bail required that he remain at home during curfew hours and that he not associate with a number of the young men who are now his co-accused in the instant offending.

At the time of the alleged commission of these offences he was awaiting sentence for serious offending involving a home invasion. There is a strong case, in my view, that he has participated in two more home invasions involving the vicious assault of residents within those homes. **It gives me no pleasure to remand a child in custody, and I regard it as a last resort. The applicant, however, is 17; he is not 12 or 14, and, in my view, represents a danger to public safety.”**

In *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 the applicant was a 13 year old boy who had been remanded in custody on charges of criminal damage and assault arising out of events that were said to have occurred at the residential care facility where he was residing. At the time he was on separate grants of bail for five outstanding sets of offences so he was also charged with committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. In finding that exceptional circumstances existed, T Forrest J said at [14]-[15]:

“Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. **Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1).** In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.

I am satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated exceptional circumstances. In particular, I am satisfied that a combination of the following factors operate to meet that stringent test:

(a) The applicant’s very young age and his difficult circumstances;

(b) Bail is not opposed [subject to the Court concluding that exceptional circumstances exist and appropriate conditions are imposed;

(c) The support offered by Youth Support and Advocacy Service, his mother, DHHS and the Supervised Bail Program;

(d) The potential of a *doli incapax* defence.

I am also satisfied that the prosecution have not established that the applicant is a s 4E unacceptable risk provided relatively strict conditions are part of his bail undertaking.”

In *Re TP* [2018] VSC 748 Champion J noted at [48]-[51] that special considerations apply to children, even those charged with serious offending; specifically s.3B(1)(a) of the **BA** requires the Court to consider all other options before a child is remanded into custody.

In *Application for Bail by JR* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Lasry J, February 2017] the applicant was a 16 year old boy charged with aggravated burglary, theft of a motor vehicle x 3, driving at a dangerous speed and reckless conduct endangering serious injury x 2, these offences representing “the continuation of a pattern of serious conduct by him”. The applicant had a very substantial criminal history despite his age, “a terrible record for one so young”. Moreover there had been “multiple previous breaches of various orders of the Children’s Court, demonstrating the unwillingness of the applicant to comply with such orders”. While on remand at the Grevillea Unit of Barwon Prison the applicant was attacked, requiring his admission to hospital at Geelong for treatment of his injuries, including a neck fracture at C7. He was later transferred to Malmsbury YJC where he was initially held in an isolation room without any contact with others. Subsequently he was able to be out of his room for 7-8 hours per day and outside in the open air for 1 hour per day but was not able to access Parkville College or the programs department. Youth Justice initially did not support the release of the applicant on bail but given the applicant’s immediate past history, his injury and his father’s illness, they supported this application for bail. In granting bail with strict conditions Lasry J said:

“My initial reaction to this application was to refuse bail, for reasons that are obvious. The applicant has a terrible history of prior offending…However, I remain conscious of the significance of s.3B of the *Bail Act*. These are not just words in a statute. They have an important role when it comes to children in custody. That section requires me to carefully consider whether there is some other option to remanding the child in custody.

The applicant gave evidence about his motivation and willingness to comply with conditions. We will see how that goes. He is far too young to give up on, but he has used up much of the goodwill of a large number of judicial officers, police, departmental officers and members of the public. His conduct simply has to change. If it cannot change, then bail is out of the question, and what becomes of him then is a matter for a Children’s Court magistrate.

…Section 3B(1)(a) of the *Bail Act* requires me to consider all other options before remanding a child in custody. Counsel for the respondent has submitted there are no other options. With respect, and after consideration, I do not yet agree. With s.3B particularly in mind, I have come to this conclusion. I am not prepared to release the applicant on bail indefinitely. I propose to impose on him a level of judicial supervision by me, which may in fact last until the applicant’s matters are dealt with in the Children’s Court…I am satisfied that the applicant has shown cause why his detention in custody is not justified, but only for a period of two weeks. I am persuaded that the risk he poses can be made acceptable for that period also…On 09/03/2017 I will resume hearing the matter to determine whether the interim order for bail should be continued. Whether or not that occurs will depend on what I am told about the applicant’s compliance during the two-week period.”

In *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372 at [23] in granting bail to a 16 year old girl charged, *inter alia*, with assisting an offender ultimately charged with culpable driving to avoid apprehension and with theft of a motor vehicle, Priest JA said:

“It is a serious thing to consign a child to custody or detention pending the resolution of a criminal charge (or charges), particularly where — as here — it is far from a foregone conclusion that the child will receive a sentence involving detention consequentially upon a finding of guilt. **Indeed, in my view, the custody or detention of a child should be avoided unless unavoidable.**”

In *Re HAH* [2019] VSC 776 the applicant was a 13 year old boy who had an IQ of 47 which placed him in the bottom 0.1% of cognitive functioning compared to children of the same age. He also had a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Throughout his infancy and early childhood, he was exposed to significant trauma in the home, including family violence, physical abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. His parents are said to have suffered from untreated mental health issues that impacted their ability to care for the applicant and his siblings. He had not had contact with his father since 2012 and has occasional phone contact with his mother, although there are no plans for reunification. He has been in the care of DHHS on a care by Secretary order since the age of 8 and was also supported by Child Protection, Berry Street and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. He was charged with theft of a phone “in a most infantile way” at a time when he was already on bail in relation to two outstanding matters and charged on summons in respect of two others. The majority of these matters involved incidents relating to his conduct at the therapeutic residential unit where he resided. He accordingly fell into the “exceptional circumstances” category. Having been refused bail by the Children’s Court, he had been on remand for 8 days. Given the applicant’s age and intellectual disability Lasry J granted bail on an undertaking pursuant to **BA**/s.16B entered into on HAH’s behalf by Jane McDonald of DHHS, who was effectively his legal guardian. At [26] his Honour said:

“As has been stated in previous decisions of this Court, the influence of s 3B is such that the assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ is different in the case of a child than it is for an adult. This means that a child may meet the requisite threshold through a combination of circumstances, including the considerations set out in s 3B, whereas an adult with the same combination of circumstances may fall short: See *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 [14]. See also *Application for Bail by LT* [2019] VSC 143 [37]; *Re CT* [65].”

Although he ultimately found no exceptional circumstances and the 17yo child was an unacceptable risk, Tinney J said in *Re DR* [2020] VSC 282 at [53]: “The authorities make it clear that in the case of a child, the consideration of every aspect of bail needs to occur through the prism of s.3B(1)”.

In *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 the appellant was an intellectually disabled 15 year old Aboriginal child who was facing a large number of charges including attempted armed robbery, burglary, theft, criminal damage, theft of motor vehicles, obtaining property by deception, unlawful assault, unlicensed driving, careless driving & 67 charges of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. It was common ground that exceptional circumstances were made out. One of the five circumstances which led the Court of Appeal to hold that the appellant was not an unacceptable risk was that he was an Aboriginal child. At [35]-[36] & [55] Maxwell P & Kaye JA said [emphasis added]:

“The critical question was whether the respondent had established that if the appellant were released on bail, he would endanger the safety and welfare of a person or commit an offence while on bail, as prescribed by s 4E of the Act. Sections 3A and 3B of the Act were of particular relevance in determining that question….**Section 3B of the Act reflects the underlying principle in the criminal justice system that a decision to hold a child in custody should be made only as of a last resort.** In considering whether to grant bail, and in the sentencing process, courts are astute to avoid imposing a term of detention, unless there is no other reasonable disposition available.”

# In *Re PJ* [2024] VSC 97 – which is summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.1** – Incerti J at [76] described the case of *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* as involving strikingly similar circumstances and at [77] noted that in that case at [103]-[104] the Court of Appeal had “described the continued pre-trial incarceration of a child who is unlikely to receive a custodial sentence as ‘akin to a form of preventative detention’, a motive that is ‘alien to fundamental principles that underpin our system of justice’.”

See also *DPP v SE* [2017] VSC 13 esp. at [30]-[35]; *Re BKT* [2018] VSC 240 at [17]; *Re IM* [2023] VSC 360 at [89]-[93]; *Re SQA; Re MG* [2023] VSC 359 at [110]-[114]; *Re DF* [2024] VSC 122 at [30] & [57].

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### **9.2.3 Powers & duties of a bail decision maker**

“**Bail decision maker**” is defined in s.3 **BA** as–

1. a court;
2. a bail justice;
3. a police officer; or
4. the sheriff or a person authorised under section 115(5) of the *Fines Reform Act 2014*–

empowered under the **BA** to grant bail, extend bail, vary the amount of bail or the conditions of bail or revoke bail.

**ss.8(1) + 8(2) – EVIDENCE IN PROCEEDINGS WITH RESPECT TO BAIL**

Section 8(1) **BA** provides that in any proceedings with respect to bail–

1. the bail decision maker is not bound by the rules of evidence;

The Explanatory Memorandum to the *Bail Amendment Act 2023* states at p.36 that this “is intended to clarify rather than change the existing law regarding the application of the rules of evidence to bail proceedings”.

1. the bail decision maker may, subject to paragraph (b), make such enquiries on oath or by affirmation or otherwise of and concerning the accused as the bail decision maker considers desirable;
2. the accused shall not be examined or cross-examined by the bail decision maker or any other person as to the offence with which the accused is charged and no inquiry shall be made of the accused as to that offence;
3. the prosecutor may, in addition to any other relevant evidence, submit evidence by affidavit or otherwise–

* to prove that the accused has previously been convicted of a criminal offence or is awaiting trial on another offence;
* to show that there is a risk that the accused may subject another person to family violence;
* to prove that the accused has previously failed to surrender into custody in answer to bail;
* to show the circumstances of the alleged offence, particularly as they relate to the probability of conviction of the accused;

1. the bail decision maker may take into consideration any relevant matters agreed upon by the parties; and
2. the bail decision maker may receive and take into account any evidence which the bail decision maker considers credible or trustworthy in the circumstances.

Section 8(2) **BA** provides that nothing in s.8(1)(aa) or s.8(1)(a) prevents the application of Part 3.10 of the *Evidence Act 2008* relating to **Privileges**.

In *R.* v *Sanghera* [1983] 2 VR 130 the informant gave opinion evidence that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail, such opinion being based on what the informant had been told by "members of the applicant's community". McGarvie J held (at p.131) that pursuant to s.8(e) of the Act, "it is open to the Court to receive any relevant evidence, whether admissible under the rules of evidence or not, which it may consider credible or trustworthy, and to take that evidence into account if in fact the Court considers it credible or trustworthy in the circumstances." However though his Honour admitted that evidence he did not deem that the applicant was an unacceptable risk.

**ss.8(3) to 8(6) – POWER TO ADJOURN IF ACCUSED SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY SUBSTANCE**

Sections 8(3) & 8(4) of the **BA** empower a bail decision maker to adjourn the hearing of a matter for up to 4 hours if satisfied that the accused appears to be seriously affected by alcohol or another drug or a combination of drugs and to remand the accused in custody in the interim.

Sections 8(5) & 8(6) of the **BA** empower a bail decision maker to adjourn the hearing of the matter for one further period of up to 4 hours if satisfied that the accused still appears to be seriously affected by alcohol or another drug or a combination of drugs and to remand the accused in custody in the interim.

**s.8A – REFUSAL OF BAIL – ANY OFFENCE – INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION**

A bail decision maker may refuse bail for a person accused of any offence if satisfied that it has not been practicable to obtain sufficient information for the purpose of deciding the matter because of the shortness of the period since the commencement of the proceedings for the offence.

**s.8B – REFUSAL OF BAIL – OFFENCE INVOLVING SERIOUS INJURY– UNCERTAINTY AS TO DEATH OR RECOVERY**

A bail decision maker may refuse bail if at the time of deciding an application for bail by a person accused of an offence of causing injury to another person it is uncertain whether the person injured will die or recover from the injury.

**s.8AA – COURT TO MAKE PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION IF TERRORISM RISK ALLEGED**

Section 8AA **BA** requires the Court – before determining whether to grant bail – to determine whether there is a risk that the accused will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence as defined in s.3 if–

* the person has not been arrested on a fine enforcement warrant; and
* the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test does not apply by operation of s.4AA(2)(a), (c) or (d); and
* the prosecutor states that he or she has terrorism risk information as defined in s.3AAC in respect of the accused and alleges that this information shows that there is a risk that the accused will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence.

**s.13 – TREASON, MURDER AND CERTAIN OTHER OFFENCES**

**s.13AA – ACCUSED WITH TERRORISM RECORD**

**s.13A – ACCUSED WITH 2 OR MORE UNDERTAKINGS OF BAIL**

Section 13 of the **BA** provides–

1. Only the Supreme Court may grant bail to a person charged with treason.
2. Only the Supreme Court, or a court on committing the person for trial, may grant bail to a person accused of murder.
3. Only a court may grant bail–
4. to a person accused of a Schedule 1 offence; or
5. subject to sub-section (4), on any other decision to which, under s.4AA, the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test applies.
6. Section 13(3) does not apply if the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test applies only because of s.4AA(2)(c) or (d) and the accused person is a child, a vulnerable adult or an Aboriginal person.
7. Only a court may grant bail to a person accused of an offence against a provision of Chapter 4 Division 72A or Part 5.3 or 5.5 of the *Criminal Code* of the Commonwealth. [See also s.15AA of the *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth).]

Under s.13AA **BA**, only a court may grant bail to a person who has a terrorism record (as defined in s.3AAB), irrespective of the offence of which the person is accused.

Under s.13A **BA**, only a court may grant bail to a person (other than a child, vulnerable adult or Aboriginal person) who is accused of a Schedule 2 offence and who is already on 2 or more undertakings of bail in relation to other indictable offences.

**ss.10 & 10AA – POWER OF POLICE OFFICER, SHERIFF OR AUTHORISED PERSON TO GRANT OR REFUSE BAIL**

Section 10 **BA** applies if a person is arrested and it is not practicable to bring the person before a court immediately after the person is taken into custody or, if questioning or investigation under s.464A(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* has commenced, immediately on the expiration of the reasonable time referred to in s.464A(1).

Under ss.10(2) & 10(5) a police officer of or above the rank of sergeant or for the time being in charge of a police station, the sheriff or an authorised person is required, without delay, to consider the issue of bail and may either–

* grant bail [unless prohibited from granting bail by by ss.10(5AA), 13, 13AA or 13A]; or
* refuse bail.

If the arrested person is a child, s.10(3) requires the bail decision maker to ensure that a parent or guardian of the child or an independent person is present during the proceeding. Under s.10(4) such independent person may take steps to facilitate the granting of bail, for example by arranging accommodation.

If bail is refused to an arrested person who is–

1. a child;
2. a vulnerable adult as defined in s.3AAAA **BA**;
3. an Aboriginal person; or
4. a person arrested on an enforcement warrant issued under the *Fines Reform Act 2014*–

section 10(6) requires the bail decision maker–

* if it is then within ordinary court sitting hours, to cause the arrested person to be brought before a court as soon as practicable;
* if it is then outside ordinary court sitting hours, to advise the arrested person that they are entitled, should they so wish, to apply to a bail justice for bail; if the person wishes to apply to a bail justice for bail, cause the person to be brought before a bail justice as soon as practicable; otherwise cause the person to be brought before a court as soon as practicable;
* to advise the arrested person that they are entitled, should they so wish, to apply for bail when they appear before the court or bail justice; and
* to endorse on the warrant, file or other papers relating to the arrested person or in any register or record of persons in custody the reasons for refusing bail and to cause this endorsement to be produced before the court or bail justice.

If bail is refused to any other adult, s.10AA **BA** requires the police bail decision maker to remand the arrested adult in custody to appear before a court as soon as practicable within the period of 48 hours after being so remanded and to advise the arrested person that they are entitled, should they so wish, to apply for bail when they appear before the court. The bail justice path does not therefore apply to an arrested adult falling within s.10AA for whom bail has been refused under s.10(5) by a police officer unless–

* the bail decision maker considers it is not practicable for the person to be brought before the court within the next 48 hours (including appearing before it by audio visual link) {s.10AA(6)}; or
* the person is not brought before a court within 48 hours after being remanded to appear before a court {s.10AA(7)}.

Sections 10(6A), (7) & (8) provide for an arrested person who has been granted bail but who objects to the amount fixed for bail or to any condition of bail and seeks a variation thereof–

* to be brought before a court as soon as practicable; or
* if it is then outside ordinary court sitting hours, to be brought before a bail justice.

**s.10A – POWER OF BAIL JUSTICE TO GRANT OR REFUSE BAIL**

If a person in custody is brought before a bail justice under s.10(6), 10(8), 10AA(6) or 10AA(7) **BA** or ss.64(2)(a) or 78(2)(a) of the *Magistrates’ Court Act 1989* or otherwise, the bail justice is required by ss.10A(2) to hear and determine any application for bail or for variation of the amount or conditions of bail, or for remand in custody, in respect of the person. Under s.10A(5) the bail justice may grant or refuse bail.

If the arrested person is a child, s.10A(3) requires the bail justice to ensure that a parent or guardian of the child or an independent person is present during the proceeding. Under s.10A(4) such independent person may take steps to facilitate the granting of bail, for example by arranging accommodation.

Under s.10A(5A) a bail justice who grants bail must certify on the remand warrant–

1. consent to the person being bailed; and
2. the amount specified in any bail guarantee; and
3. any conditions of bail.

Under s.10A(6) a bail justice who refuses bail must remand the person in custody to appear before a court–

1. on the next working day; or
2. within 2 working days if–
3. the next working day is no practicable; or
4. the person is a child and the proper venue of the Children’s Court is in a region of the state prescribed under the CYFA.

On remanding the person in custody s.10A(7) requires the bail justice to certify on the remand warrant a statement of the refusal of bail and of the grounds for it.

If a bail justice is prohibited by ss.10A(5AA), 13, 13AA or 13A **BA** from granting bail to a person, s.10B requires the informant to cause the person to be brought before a court as soon as practicable.

**ss.12 & 12B – POWER OF COURT TO GRANT OR REFUSE BAIL**

If a person in custody is brought before a court under s.10(6), 10(8), 10AA(4), 10A(5AAB) or 10AAB(6) **BA** or ss.64(2)(a) of the *Magistrates’ Court Act 1989* or otherwise, the court is required by s.12(2) to hear and determine any application for bail or for variation of the amount or conditions of bail, or for remand in custody, in respect of the person.

Under ss.12(3) & 12(3AA) the court may–

* grant bail; or
* refuse bail; or
* allow the person to go at large if the court considers it appropriate to do so and the court is not required to refuse bail.

Under s.12(3A) a court that grants bail must certify on the remand warrant, file or other papers–

1. consent to the person being bailed; and
2. the amount specified in any bail guarantee; and
3. any conditions of bail.

Under s.12(4) if the court refuses bail, it must–

1. remand the person in custody to appear before a court at a later date, which must not be for a period longer than 21 clear days in the case of a child; and
2. certify on the remand warrant a statement of the refusal and the grounds for it.

Section 12(5) provides that if a child is brought before a court on the expiry of a period of remand in custody, the court must not remand the child in custody for a further period longer than 21 clear days.

Section 12B of the **BA** provides that if a person subject to a summons to answer to a charge for an offence is before a court (other than the Children’s Court) and the hearing is to be adjourned, the court may, on an application by the prosecutor or on its own initiative – but subject to new ss.12B(2A) 12B(2B) & 12B(2C) – remand the accused in custody or grant the accused bail.

### **9.2.4 *Prima facie* entitlement to bail and exceptions thereto – Flow charts**

Prior to 01/07/2018 s.4(1) of the **BA** picked up the common law rule enunciated by Cussen J in *R v Sefton* [1917] VR 259 at 261-2 and gave a person accused of an offence, whether adult or child, a *prima facie* entitlement to bail except in the limited circumstances where-

* the accused was required to show **exceptional circumstances** under s.4(2)(a); or
* the accused was required to **show cause** under s.4(4); or
* the accused was an **unacceptable risk** under s.4(2)(d); or
* the case was **adjourned for further inquiries or pre-sentence report** in the circumstances in s.4(1)(c).

In *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [34] Bell J said:

“Reflecting the importance of the presumption of innocence and the prosecutorial onus of proof as well as the right of all persons to liberty and freedom of movement at common law, s 4(1) has always provided, and still provides, that accused persons being held in custody have a presumptive entitlement to bail, as at common law: *Light* [1954] VLR 152, 157 (Sholl J). However, the presumptive entitlement to bail is displaced in the circumstances specified in s 4(2) (exceptional circumstances) and 4(4) (show cause).”

Prior to 01/07/2018 the **BA** was complicated enough, leading the majority of the Court of Appeal (Maxwell P & Redlich JA) to say in *Robinson v R* (2015) 47 VR 226; [2015] VSCA 161 at [47]:

“Finally, we would draw attention to — and endorse — the recommendation of the Victorian Law Reform Commission, in its 2007 Report entitled *Review of the Bail Act 1997*, that the reverse onus tests should be removed altogether. This reform would greatly simplify Victorian bail law, without weakening it in any way. The Commission’s reasoning is compelling:

‘We recommend the removal of reverse onus tests so all bail decisions are made on the basis of unacceptable risk.  We do not believe this will alter the outcome of bail decisions because decision makers have told us unacceptable risk is always the ultimate test.  Reverse onuses apply to a small number of offences, many of which do not commonly come before the court.’”

Far from adopting that dicta and the recommendation of the Victorian Law Reform Commission, in the 2018 **BA** amendments the reverse onus tests have been retained, the number of offences to which a reverse onus applies have been increased and the **BA** has become significantly more complex. As and from 01/07/2018 section 4 of the **BA** was completely rewritten and from 01/10/2018 those amendments were themselves significantly amended. However s.4 still reflects the common law rule that a person accused of an offence, whether adult or child, has a *prima facie* entitlement to bail except in the significantly expanded circumstances now detailed in the **BA**. From 25/03/2024–

* ss.4, 4A & 4C are unchanged;
* new s.4AAA was added;
* ss.4AA, 4D & 4E are varied; and
* s.3D contains the 5 illustrative flow charts depicted on later pages which are intended only as a guide to the decision-making process.

Section 4B was repealed in 2018 and ss 4, 4AAA, 4AA, 4A, 4C, 4D & 4E now read as follows:

**s.4 – ENTITLEMENT TO BAIL**

A person accused of an offence, and being held in custody in relation to that offence, is entitled to be granted bail unless the bail decision maker is required to refuse bail by the **BA**.

**s.4AAA – OFFENCES IN RESPECT OF WHICH BAIL MUST NOT BE REFUSED**

(1) Despite anything to the contrary in any other provision of the **BA**, a bail decision maker who is deciding whether to grant bail to a person accused of an offence must not refuse bail if–

1. the person is accused only of offences against the *Summary Offences Act 1966* that are not referred to in Schedule 3;
2. the person does not have a terrorism record; and
3. if the bail decision maker is a court, no exception under subsection (2) applies.

**BA Schedule 3** sets out the offences against provisions of the ***Summary Offences Act 1966*** that are exceptions to the general prohibition against refusing bail contained in new **s.4AAA(1)(a)** **BA**. These are:

1. Section 19(1)—Sexual exposure
2. Section 23—Common assault
3. Sections 24(1) or 24(2)—Aggravated assault
4. Section 41A—Observation of genital or anal region
5. Section 41H(2)—Food or drink spiking
6. Section 41K(1)—Public display of Nazi symbols

10A. Section 49F—Contravening conduct condition of bail undertaking

1. Sections 51(2), 51(3) or 51(4)—Assaulting etc emergency workers, custodial officers, youth justice custodial workers or local authority staff on duty
2. Sections 51A(1) or 51A(2)—Assaulting registered health practitioners
3. Section 52A—Harass witness etc

plus offences under sections 41B, 41C, 41DA(1) or 41DB(1) as in force before their repeal.

1. An exception applies for the purposes of s.4AAA(1)(c) if–
2. the court has determined under s.8AA that there is a risk that the person will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence; or
3. the person was previously granted bail in respect of any of the offences of which the person is accused and that bail was subsequently revoked.
4. A reference in the **BA** to a bail decision maker considering, deciding or determining whether to grant bail (however described) includes a reference to a bail decision maker who is prohibited from refusing bail by subsection (1).
5. Nothing in this section limits the power of a court to revoke bail.

**s.4AA – WHEN 2 STEP TESTS APPLY**

1. The **step 1 – exceptional circumstances test** applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 1 offence.
2. The **step 1 – exceptional circumstances test** also applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence if–
3. the person has a terrorism record as defined in s.3AAB; or
4. the court considering whether to grant bail determines under s.8AA that there is a risk that the person will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence as defined in s.3; or
5. the offence is alleged to have been committed–

* while the accused was on bail, on summons or on remand for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was at large awaiting trial or sentence for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* during the period of a community correction order made in respect of the accused for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was otherwise serving a sentence for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was released under a parole order made in respect of any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or

1. the offence is an offence of conspiracy to commit, incitement to commit or attempting to commit an offence in a circumstance set out in paragraph (c).
2. For the purposes of s.4AA(2)(c) **BA**, an accused who is released on an undertaking under s.72 or s.75 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* is not at large awaiting sentence or serving a sentence for the relevant offence.
3. The **step 1 – show compelling reason test** applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence if subsection (2) does not apply.
4. The **step 1 – show compelling reason test** also applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of an offence that is neither a Schedule 1 nor a Schedule 2 offence if–
5. the person has a terrorism record as defined in s.3AAB; or
6. the court considering whether to grant bail determines under s.8AA that there is a risk that the person will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence as defined in s.3.

**s.4A – STEP 1 – EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES TEST**

1. This section applies if, under s.4AA(1) or (2), the **step 1 – exceptional circumstances test** applies to a decision of whether to grant bail.

(1A) The bail decision maker must refuse bail unless satisfied that **exceptional circumstances** exist that justify the grant of bail.

1. The accused bears the burden of satisfying the bail decision maker as to the existence of exceptional circumstances.
2. In considering whether exceptional circumstances exist, the bail decision maker must take into account the surrounding circumstances.
3. If the bail decision maker is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail, the bail decision maker must then move to **step 2 – unacceptable risk test**.

**s.4C – STEP 1 – SHOW COMPELLING REASON TEST**

1. This section applies if, under s.4AA(3) or (4), the **step 1 - show compelling reason test test** applies to a decision of whether to grant bail.

(1A) The bail decision maker must refuse bail unless satisfied that **a compelling reason** exists that justifies the grant of bail.

1. The accused bears the burden of satisfying the bail decision maker as to the existence of a compelling reason.
2. In considering whether a compelling reason exists, the bail decision maker must take into account the surrounding circumstances.
3. If the bail decision maker is satisfied that a compelling reason exists that justifies the grant of bail, the bail decision maker must move to **step 2 – unacceptable risk test**.

**s.4D – STEP 2 – WHEN UNACCEPTABLE RISK TEST APPLIES**

A bail decision maker must apply the **unacceptable risk test**–

1. on s.4A(4) or s.4C(4) requiring the bail decision maker to move to the **step 2 – unacceptable risk test**; or
2. on a decision of whether to grant bail to which, under s.4AA applies, neither the **step 1 – exceptional circumstances test** nor the **step 1 – show compelling reason test** applies.

**s.4E – ALL OFFENCES – UNACCEPTABLE RISK TEST**

1. A bail decision maker must refuse bail for a person accused of any offence if the bail decision maker is satisfied that there is an **unacceptable risk** that the accused would, if released on bail–

(iaa) commit a Schedule 1 or a Schedule 2 offence; or

1. otherwise endanger the safety or welfare of any **other** person, **whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means**; or
2. interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or
3. fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail.

Before 25/03/2024 s.4E(1)(a)(ii) **BA** provided that a bail decision maker must refuse bail if there was an unacceptable risk that the accused would commit an offence while on bail. That is no longer a basis for refusing bail unless the risk is that the accused would commit a Schedule 1 or a Schedule 2 offence or unless the accused is an unacceptable risk of committing an offence on bail which would endanger the safety and welfare of any **other** person under s.4E(1)(a)(i).

The addition of the word “**other**” makes it clear that s.4E(1)(a)(i) does not extend to an offence which only endangers the safety or welfare of the applicant for bail.

Further, the wording of s.4E(1)(a)(iv) is inconsistent with s.5(1) and the amended s.5AAA(1)(d) – plus its associated Explanatory Memorandum – which comments that “the requirement to surrender arises under the bail undertaking itself and not under the conditions of bail”. It is also inconsistent with amended ss.24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(3)(a), 24(3)(b), 26(2), 27(1) & 30(1) **BA**.

1. The prosecutor bears the burden of satisfying the bail decision maker as to the existence of a risk of a kind mentioned in s.4E(1) and that the risk is an unacceptable risk.
2. In considering whether a risk in s.4E(1) is an unacceptable risk, the bail decision maker must-
3. take into account the **surrounding circumstances**; and
4. consider whether there are any conditions of bail that may be imposed to mitigate the risk so that it is not an **unacceptable risk**.

**s.3AAA – “SURROUNDING CIRCUMSTANCES”**

(1) If the **BA** provides that a bail decision maker must take into account the **surrounding circumstances**, the bail decision maker must take into account all the circumstances that are relevant to the matter including, but not limited to, the following-

(aa) whether, if the accused were found guilty of the offence with which the accused is charged, it is likely–

1. that the accused would be sentenced to a term of imprisonment; and
2. if so, that the time the accused would spend remanded in custody if bail is refused would exceed that term of imprisonment.
3. the nature and seriousness of the alleged offending, including whether it is a serious example of the offence;
4. the strength of the prosecution case;
5. the accused’s criminal history;
6. the extent to which the accused has complied with the conditions of any earlier grant of bail;
7. whether, at the time of the alleged offending, the accused-
8. was on bail for another offence; or
9. was subject to a summons to answer to a charge for another offence; or
10. was at large awaiting trial for another offence; or

(iiia) was on remand for another offence; or

(iiib) was at large awaiting sentence for another offence; or

1. was released under a parole order; or
2. was subject to a community correction order made in respect of, or was otherwise serving a sentence for, another offence;
3. whether there is in force-
4. a family violence intervention order made against the accused; or
5. a family violence safety notice issued against the accused; or
6. a recognised DVO made against the accused;
7. the accused’s personal circumstances, associations, home environment and background;
8. any special vulnerability of the accused, including–
9. being an Aboriginal person; or
10. being a child; or
11. experiencing any ill health, including mental illness; or
12. having a disability, including physical disability, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment;
13. the availability of treatment or bail support services;
14. any known view or likely view of an alleged victim of the offending on the grant of bail, the amount of bail or the conditions of bail;
15. the length of time the accused is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused;
16. the likely sentence to be imposed should the accused be found guilty of the offence with which the accused is charged;
17. whether the accused has expressed support for the doing of a terrorist act or a terrorist organisation or for the provision of resources to a terrorist organisation;
18. subject to s.3AAA(2), whether the accused has, or has had, an association with-
19. another person or a group that has expressed support of the kind referred to in paragraph (m); or
20. another person or a group that is directly or indirectly engaged in, preparing for, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of a terrorist act; or
21. a terrorist organisation.
22. A bail decision maker must not take into account any of the matters in paragraph (n) above unless satisfied that the accused had the requisite knowledge.

**‘ONE STEP’ PROCESS FOR BAIL DETERMINATION REJECTED – *ASMAR* NOT GOOD LAW**

Between 2005 & 2018 there had been a divergence of opinion between various judicial officers in the Victorian Supreme Court as to whether showing a compelling reason (showing cause) was a ‘one step’ or a ‘two step’ process.

The traditional approach to the former s.4(4) of the **BA** was that cases where an accused was required to show **a compelling reason** why his or her detention in custody was not justified involved a ‘two step’ process: ➊ the burden was on the accused to show such a compelling reason; and ➋ if the accused did so, bail must be granted unless the prosecution established that there was an **unacceptable risk** that if released on bail, the accused may commit one of the proscribed acts. On this model the onus shifts from the accused in the first step to the Crown in the second. The leading case was *DPP v Harika* [2001] VSC 237 {MC11/01} where at [41] & [44]-[48] Gillard J said:

"Any person accused of an offence is entitled to bail. That is the general rule laid down by s.4(1) of the Act. However, in some circumstances, the right to bail is abrogated and instead, the applicant must prove to the satisfaction of [the] Court 'why his detention in custody is not justified'. See s.4(4). The applicant for bail has the burden of proving that his detention in custody is not justified…

However, that is not the end of the inquiry. If he establishes cause, the Court shall refuse bail if it is satisfied there is an unacceptable risk that if the applicant is released on bail, he may commit one or more of the prohibited acts set out in s.4(2)(d). These include failing to answer bail, committing another offence whilst on bail or interfering with a witness. The factors that must be weighed in considering the question of unacceptable risk are set out in s.4(3). It is noted that the Court must consider all relevant matters, and the list of specified ones is not exhaustive. The Court is bound to consider the nature and seriousness of the offence, the background of the accused, the history of previous grants of bail, the strength of the evidence against him, and also the attitude, if expressed to the Court, of the alleged victim. As I have already stated, this list is not exhaustive. The burden of establishing unacceptable risk lies upon the Crown.

The two inquiries can overlap, in the sense that the unacceptable risk factors have to be weighed, when considering whether the applicant for bail has shown cause.

The Act does not define what is meant by the phrase 'shows cause why his detention in custody is not justified'. It is trite to observe that all relevant circumstances must be weighed, leading to the conclusion that the detention in custody is not justified. In considering the issue of cause, the Court must not overlook the object of s.4(4)."

Other cases in which the ‘two step’ process has been adopted include–

* *Re Mark Clifford Hayden* [2005] VSC 160 at [10] per Kellam J;
* *Bail Application by Michael Paterson* [2006] VSC 268 at [26]-[27] per Gillard J;
* *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [55]-[56].

The ‘one step’ process was first propounded by Maxwell P in *Re Fred Joseph Asmar* [2005] VSC 487. In that case the applicant and the Crown had been “united in submitting that the correct approach was that set out by Gillard J in *DPP v Harika*”. However, at [17] Maxwell P said:

“I think it is important to make clear that once the applicant for bail shows cause that his detention is not justified, that *is* the end of the inquiry. There is no second step. Nor, therefore, is there any shift of onus. Where s.4(4) applied, the applicant bears the onus from start to finish, of showing that his/her detention is not justified.”

Other cases in which the ‘one step’ process has been adopted include–

* *Watts v DPP* [2007] VSC 275 at [5] Bongiorno J;
* *Re Magee* [2009] VSC 384 at [12] per J Forrest J;
* *Re Lawson Odlum* [2008] VSC 319 at [10] per Lasry J;
* *Re George Dickson* [2008] VSC 516 at [4] per Lasry J;
* *Re Gruevski* [2013] VSC 349 at [6] per T Forrest J;
* *RS* [2013] VSC 350 per Elliott J;
* *Bail Application – Bunning* [2013] VSC 618 at [35]-[38] per Kaye J.

*Robinson v R* (2015) 47 VR 226; [2015] VSCA 161 was an appeal from a decision of Forrest J who had refused bail to an alleged trafficking conspirator and drug debt enforcer. The Court of Appeal [Maxwell P, Redlich & Priest JJA] allowed the appeal and granted bail on strict conditions. The cases of *Asmar*, *Harika* & *Woods* were widely traversed. Redlich JA concluded at [46] that the construction of s.4(4) was a matter that ought to be considered by a 5 member bench, but "in the meantime, there is every reason to be confident that, barring some unusual circumstance, bail decisions under s.4(4) can continue to be made without the question of construction creating any difficulty." Priest JA concluded at [82]: "It is unhelpful and unnecessary to concentrate on whether the consideration of bail in a case such as the present is a ‘one-step’ or a ‘two-step’ process. There is but one issue for determination, as to which the interested parties bear different burdens."

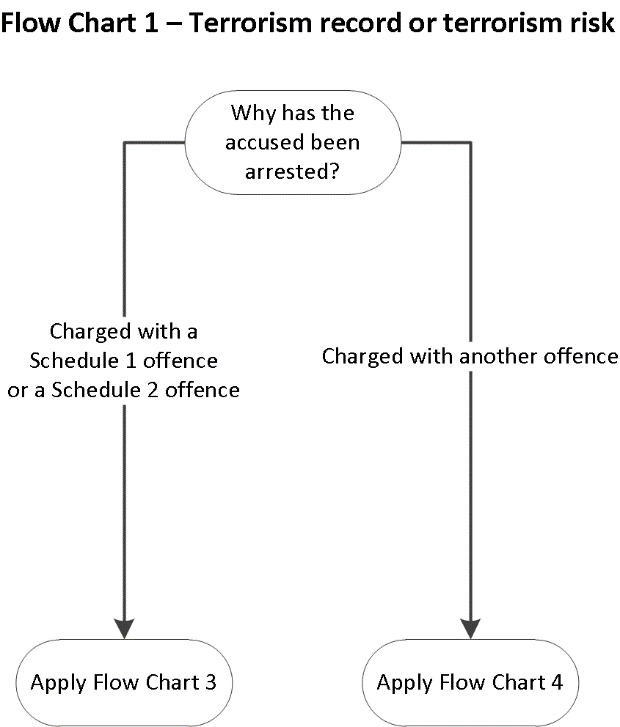
The dilemma has now been substantially resolved by Parliament. As and from 01/07/2018 the bail process is now defined as a ‘two-step’ process. The decisions which adopted a ‘one step’ process – first propounded by Maxwell P in *Re Fred Joseph Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 – are no longer good law. The bail process is summarised in the following chart:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **s.4** | **A person in custody is entitled to bail (see *R v Sefton* [1917] VLR 259 at 261-2; *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [34]) unless:** | |
| **STEP 1 – SCHEDULE 1 OR SCHEDULE 2 OFFENCE AND/OR TERRORISM RECORD/RISK** | | |
| **ss.4AA + 4A** | **Exceptional circumstances**  **See 9.2.5 & 9.4.1** | The onus is on the accused to show **exceptional circumstances** if–   * the offence is Schedule 1; or * the offence is Schedule 2 and– * the accused is– * on a CCO or otherwise serving a sentence (other than an undertaking under ss.72 or 75 *Sentencing Act 1991*); or * awaiting trial or sentence or on parole–   for a prior Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence; or   * the offence is conspiracy, incitement or attempt to commit the offence in the above circumstances; or * the accused has a terrorism record or there is a risk the accused will commit a terrorism offence. |
| **ss.4AA + 4C** | **Show compelling reason**  **See 9.2.6 & 9.4.2** | The onus is on the accused to show a **compelling reason** if–   * the offence is Schedule 2 and the accused is **not**– * on a CCO or otherwise serving a sentence (other than an undertaking under ss.72 or 75 *Sentencing Act 1991*); or * awaiting trial or sentence or on parole–   for a prior Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence; or   * the offence is **not** Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 but the accused has a terrorism record or there is a risk the accused will commit a terrorism offence. |
| **STEP 2 – FOR ANY OFFENCE** | | |
| **ss.4D + 4E** | **Unacceptable risk**  **See 9.4.4** | If the accused has satisfied any burden imposed by step 1, the onus is on the prosecutor to satisfy the bail decision maker that, taking into account the “surrounding circumstances”, the accused is an unacceptable risk of–   * endangering the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or * interfering with a witness or otherwise obstructing the course of justice; or * failing to surrender into custody in accordance with the bail terms. |
| **S.4E(3)** | The bail decision maker must take into account the **surrounding circumstances** and consider whether there are conditions of bail that may be imposed to mitigate the risk from **unacceptable** to **acceptable**. | |

**s.3D – FLOW CHARTS**

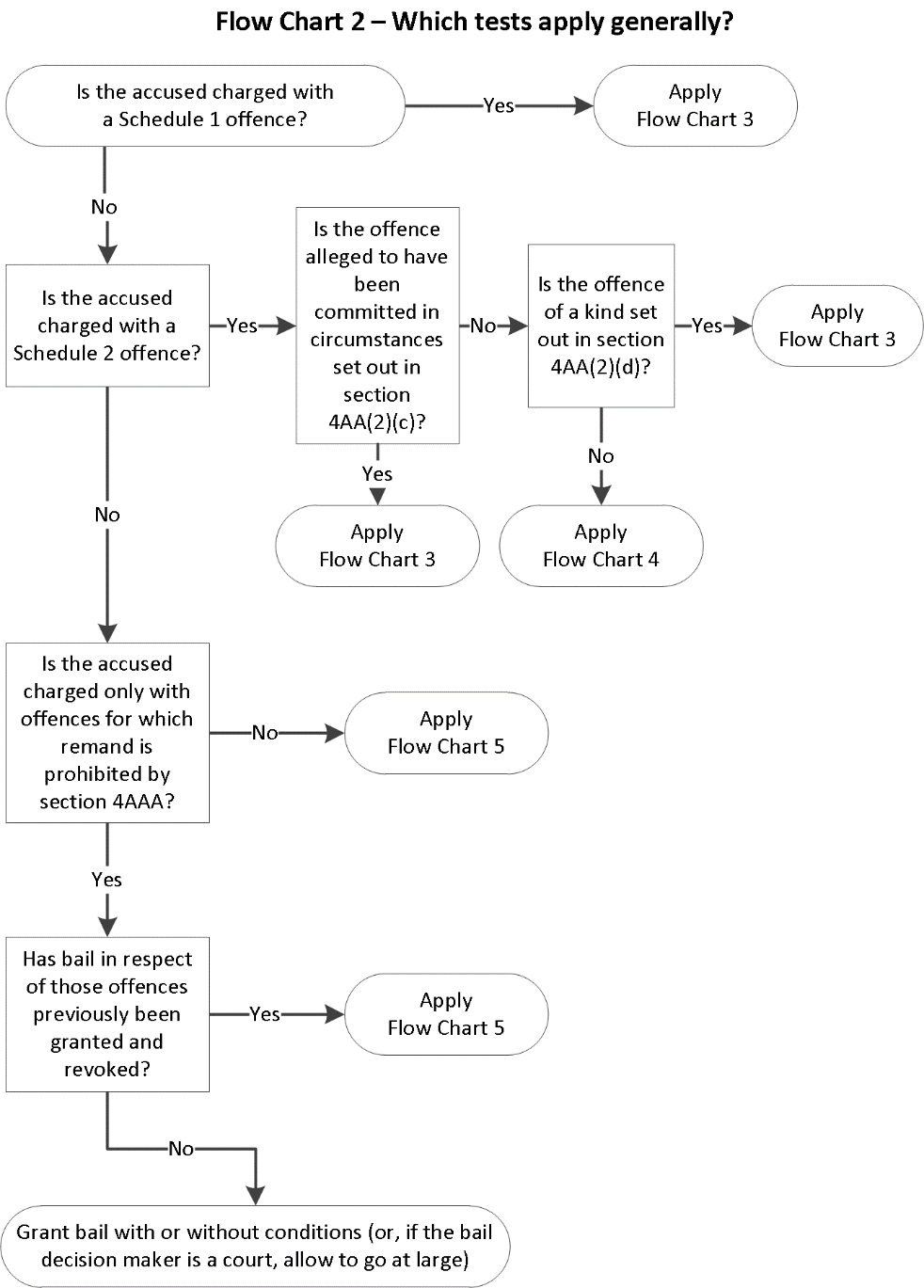
**SECTION 3D(2)**

**FLOW CHART 1 SHOWS THE PROCESS FOR DETERMINING WHICH TESTS ARE TO BE APPLIED IN DECIDING WHETHER TO GRANT BAIL TO A PERSON IF THE PERSON HAS A TERRORISM RECORD OR THE COURT DETERMINES UNDER S.8AA THAT THERE IS A RISK THAT THE PERSON WILL COMMIT A TERRORISM OR FOREIGN INCURSION OFFENCE**



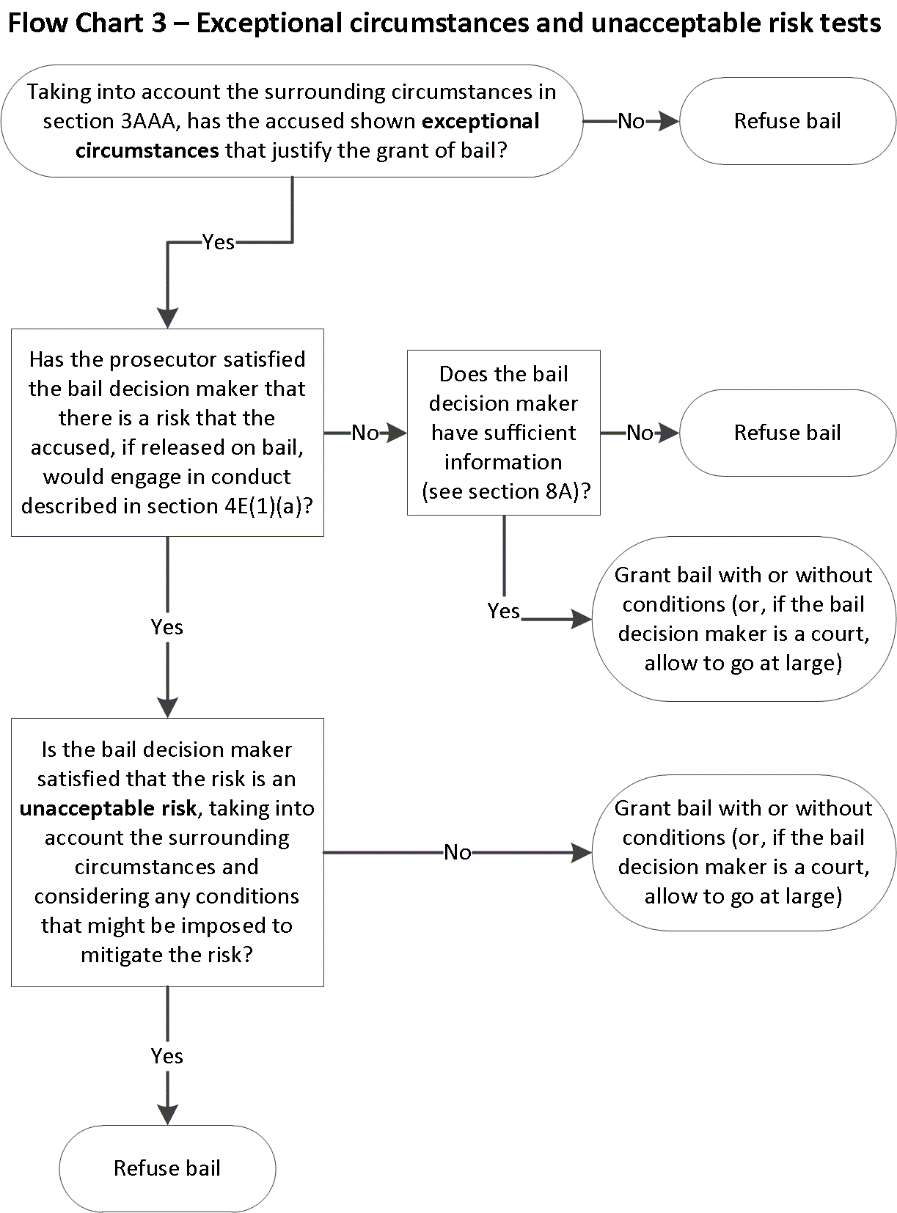
**SECTION 3D(3)**

**FLOW CHART 2 SHOWS THE PROCESS FOR DETERMINING WHICH TESTS ARE TO BE APPLIED IN DECIDING WHETHER TO GRANT BAIL TO A PERSON WHO NEITHER HAS A TERRORISM RECORD NOR IS A RISK OF COMMITTING A TERRORISM OR FOREIGN INCURSION OFFENCE**



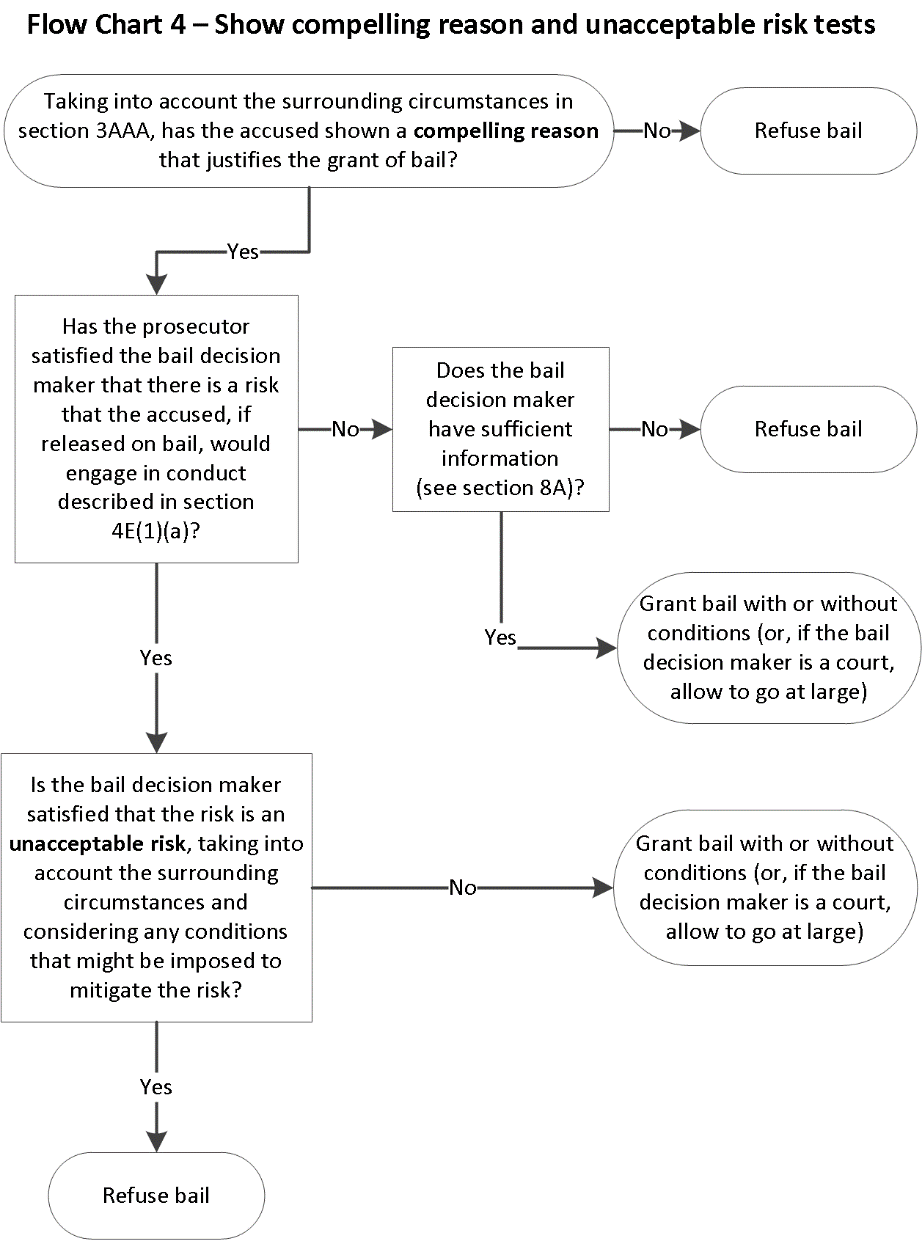
**SECTION 3D(4)**

**FLOW CHART 3 SHOWS THE PROCESS FOR APPLYING THE STEP 1 – EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES TEST AND THEN THE STEP 2 – UNACCEPTABLE RISK TEST**



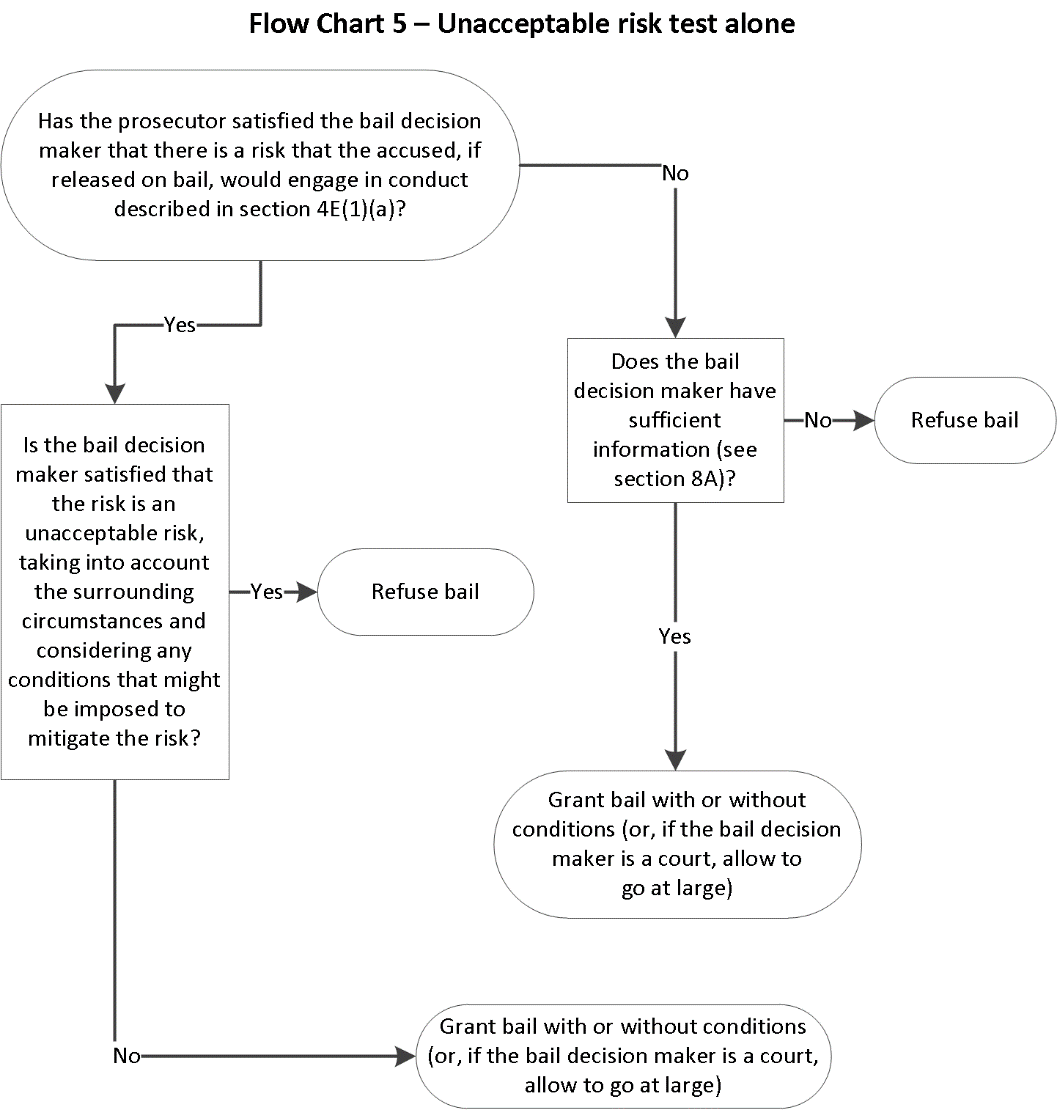
**SECTION 3D(5)**

**FLOW CHART 4 SHOWS THE PROCESS FOR APPLYING THE STEP 1 – SHOW COMPLELLING REASON TEST AND THEN THE STEP 2 – UNACCEPTABLE RISK TEST**



**SECTION 3D(5)**

**FLOW CHART 5 SHOWS THE PROCESS FOR APPLYING THE UNACCEPTABLE RISK TEST ALONE**



### **9.2.5 Step 1 – exceptional circumstances test**

Sections 4A(1) & (1A) of the **BA** – read in conjunction with ss.4AA(1) & (2) – provide that a bail decision maker must refuse bail for a person accused of–

* a **Schedule 1** offence; or
* a **Schedule 2** offence in the circumstances set out in s.4AA(2)–

unless satisfied that **exceptional circumstances** exist that justify the grant of bail.

Section 3AA of the **BA** provides that an offence that is both a Schedule 1 offence and a Schedule 2 offence must be taken to be a Schedule 1 offence.

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **SCHEDULE 1 OFFENCES**  **CA=*Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), DPCSA=*Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Act 1981* (Vic)** | | | 1. Treason. 2. Murder. 3. … 4. Aggravated home invasion [**CA**, s.77B]. 5. Aggravated carjacking [**CA**, s.79A]. 6. Trafficking in a large commercial quantity [**DPCSA**, s.71] or in a commercial quantity [**DPCSA**, s.71AA] of a drug of dependence. Cultivation of a large commercial quantity [**DPCSA**, s.72] or a commercial quantity [**DPCSA**, s.72A] of a narcotic plant. Conspiracy to commit any of the above offences [**DPCSA**, s.79]. 7. An offence against ss.71(1), 72(1) or 79(1) of the **DPCSA** as in force before the commencement of the 2001 amendments. 8. Additional drug offences involving a commercial quantity of drugs of dependence or narcotic goods under ss.302.2, 302.3, 303.4, 303.5, 304.1, 304.2, 305.3 or 305.4 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth). | 1. Additional drug offences involving a commercial quantity of drugs of dependence or narcotic goods under ss.307.1, 307.2, 307.5, 307.6, 307.8 or 307.9 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth). 2. An offence against ss.231(1), 233A or 233B(1) of the *Customs Act 1901* (Cth) involving a commercial quantity of narcotic goods. 3. An offence against s.4B(1) or 21W of the *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003*. 4. Conspiracy to commit, incitement to commit or attempt to commit an offence listed in Schedule 1. 5. Any other offence the necessary elements of which consist of elements that constitute an offence referred to in any other item of this Schedule.   The heading to Division 7 of the amending Act makes it clear that new item 13 is intended to refer to historical offences corresponding to the offences listed in any of the other items in this Schedule. | | |

Section 4AA(2) provides that the exceptional circumstances test also applies to a decision of whether to grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence if—

1. the person has a terrorism record; or
2. the court considering whether to grant bail determines under section 8AA that there is a risk that the person will commit a terrorism or foreign incursion offence; or
3. the offence is alleged to have been committed—

* while the accused was on bail, on summons or on remand for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was at large awaiting trial or sentence for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* during the period of a community correction order made in respect of the accused for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was otherwise serving a sentence for any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or
* while the accused was released under a parole order made in respect of any Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence; or

(d) the offence is an offence of conspiracy to commit, incitement to commit or attempting to commit an offence in a circumstance set out in paragraph (c).

New s.4AA(5) **BA** clarifies that for the purposes of s.4AA(2)(c) **BA**, an accused who is released on an undertaking under s.72 or s.75 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* is not at large awaiting sentence or serving a sentence for the relevant offence. See section **9.2.5/6**.

### **9.2.6 Step 1 – show compelling reason test**

Sections 4C(1) & (1A) of the **BA** – read in conjunction with ss.4AA(3) & (4) – provide that a bail decision maker must refuse bail for a person accused of–

* a **Schedule 2** offence; or
* an offence in the circumstances set out in s.4AA(4)–

unless satisfied that a **compelling reason** exists that justifies the grant of bail.

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| **SCHEDULE 2 OFFENCES**  **CA=*Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), DPCSA=*Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Act 1981* (Vic)**  **SOSA=*Serious Offenders Act 2018* (Vic)** | |
| 1. … 2. Manslaughter. 3. Child homicide. 4. Causing serious injury intentionally in circumstances of gross violence [**CA**, s.15A]. 5. Causing serious injury recklessly in circumstances of gross violence [**CA**, s.15B]. 6. Causing serious injury intentionally [**CA**, s.16]. 7. Threat to kill [**CA**, s.20] that is also a family violence offence. 8. See next page. 9. Rape [**CA**, s.38(1)]. 10. Rape by compelling sexual penetration [**CA**, s.39(1)]. 11. Assault with intent to commit a sexual offence [**CA**, s.42(1)]. 12. Abduction or detention for a sexual purpose [**CA**, s.47(1)]. 13. Sexual penetration of a child under the age of 12 [**CA**, s.49A(1)]. 14. Sexual penetration of a child under the age of 16 except where the child was 12 years of age or more and the accused was not more than 2 years older than the child [**CA**, s.49B(1)]. 15. Persistent sexual abuse of a child under the age of 16 [**CA**, s.49J(1)]. 16. Abduction or detention of a child under the age of 16 for a sexual purpose [**CA**, s.49P(1)]. 17. Incest in circumstances other than where both people are aged 18 or over [**CA**, ss.50C(1), 50D(1), 50E(1), 50F(1)].   18-20. See below.   1. Kidnapping [**CA**, s.63A]. 2. Armed robbery [**CA**, s.75A(1)].   Aggravated burglary [**CA**, s.77].  Home invasion [**CA**, s.77A].  Carjacking [**CA**, s.79].  Arson causing death [**CA**, s.197A].  Intentionally or recklessly exposing emergency worker, custodial officer or youth justice custodial officer to risk by driving [**CA**, ss.317AC, 317AD, 317AE, 317AF].  Damaging emergency service vehicle [**CA**, s.317AG].  Culpable driving causing death [**CA**, s.318(1)].  Dangerous driving causing death or serious injury [**CA**, ss.319(1) or 319(1A)].  Dangerous or negligent driving while pursued by police [**CA**, s.319AA(1)]. | 1. Any indictable offence where the accused, or any person involved in the commission of the offence, is alleged to have used or threatened to use a firearm, offensive weapon, or explosive as defined by **CA**, s.77. 2. Trafficking in a drug of dependence to a child [**DPCSA**, s.71AB].   Trafficking in a drug of dependence [**DPCSA**, s.71AC].  Cultivation of narcotic plants [**DPCSA**, s.72B].  Conspiracy to commit any of the above 3 offences [**DPCSA**, s.79(1).   1. Trafficking in a drug of dependence [**DPCSA**, s.71(1)].   Cultivation of narcotic plants [**DPCSA**, s.72(1)].  Conspiracy to commit any of the above 2 offences [**DPCSA**, s.79(1).   1. An offence against ss.302.2, 302.3, 303.4, 303.5, 304.1, 304.2, 305.3, 305.4, 306.2, 307.1, 307.2, 307.5, 307.6, 307.8, 307.9, 307.11, 309.3, 309.4, 309.7, 309.8, 309.10, 309.11, 309.12, 309.13, 309.14 or 309.15 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth). 2. An offence against ss.231(1), 233A or 233B(1) of *Customs Act 1901* (Cth) involving a commercial or trafficable quantity of narcotic goods. 3. An indictable offence that is alleged to have been committed while the accused is the subject of a supervision order, or interim supervision order, within the meaning of the **SSOA**. 4. An indictable offence, and the accused, at any time during the bail proceeding, is the subject of a supervision order, or interim supervision order, within the meaning of the **SSOA**. 5. ~~An offence against the~~ **~~BA~~**~~.~~   Item 30 was repealed from 25/03/2024. There is presently a private member’s Bill – the *Bail Amendment (Indictable Offences Whilst on Bail) Bill 2024* – which was introduced into the Legislative Council on 21/02/2024 by Mr Evan Mulholland and passed its First Reading that day. The main purpose of this Bill is to restore the offence of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail [s.30B **BA**] but the Bill does not seek to restore item 30 of Schedule 2.   1. Conspiracy to commit, incitement to commit or attempt to commit an offence listed in Schedule 2. 2. Any other offence the necessary elements of which consist of elements that constitute an offence referred to in any other item of this Schedule.   The heading to Division 7 of the amending Act makes it clear that new item 32 is intended to refer to historical offences corresponding to the offences listed in any of the other items in this Schedule. |

Item 1 was repealed from 25/03/2024. It previously provided:

“An indictable offence that is alleged to have been committed by the accused–

1. while on bail for another indictable offence; or
2. while subject to a summons to answer to a charge for another indictable offence; or
3. while at large awaiting trial for another indictable offence; or
4. during the period of a community correction order made in respect of the accused for another indictable offence or while otherwise serving a sentence for another indictable offence; or
5. while released under a parole order.”

This item has been included in fairly similar terms in amended s.4AA **BA**.

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| |  | | --- | | **ADDITIONAL SCHEDULE 2 OFFENCES**  **CA=*Crimes Act 1958* (Vic); DPCSA=*Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Act 1981* (Vic)**  **FVPA=*Family Violence Protection Act 2008* (Vic)**  **PSIA=*Personal Safety Intervention Orders Act 2010* (Vic)** | |
| 1. Stalking [**CA**, s.21A(1)] and- 2. the accused has within the preceding 10 years been convicted or found guilty of an offence against s.21A(1) in relation to any person or an offence in the course committing which the accused used or threatened to use violence against any person; or 3. the bail decision maker is satisfied that the accused on a separate occasion used or threatened to use violence against the person whom the accused is alleged to have stalked, whether or not the accused has been convicted or found guilty of, or charged with, an offence in connection with that use or threatened use of violence. 4. Contravening a family violence intervention order or family violence safety notice [**FVPA**, ss.37, 37A, 123 or 123A] in the course of committing which the accused is alleged to have used or threatened to use violence and- 5. the accused has within the preceding 10 years been convicted or found guilty of an offence in the course of which the accused used or threatened to use violence against any person; or 6. the bail decision maker is satisfied that the accused on a separate occasion used or threatened to use violence against the person who is the subject of the order or the notice, whether or not the accused has been convicted or found guilty of, or charged with, an offence in connection with that use or threatened use of violence. 7. Persistent contravention of family violence intervention notices and orders [**FVPA**, s.125A(1)]. 8. Contravening a personal safety intervention order [**PSIA**, s.100] in the course of committing which the accused is alleged to have used or threatened to use violence and- 9. the accused has within the preceding 10 years been convicted or found guilty of an offence in the course of which the accused used or threatened to use violence against any person; or 10. the bail decision maker is satisfied that the accused on a separate occasion used or threatened to use violence against the person who is the subject of the order or the notice, whether or not the accused has been convicted or found guilty of, or charged with, an offence in connection with that use or threatened use of violence. |

### **9.2.5/6 Meaning of “serving a sentence” for the tests in 9.2.5 & 9.2.6**

Under s.4AA(2)(c) of the **BA** the **exceptional circumstances** test applies to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence if, *inter alia*, the offence is alleged to have occurred while the person was **“serving a sentence”** for any Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence. Under s.4AA(3), read in conjunction with item 1 in Schedule 2, the **compelling reason** test applies to a person accused of any other indictable offence if the offence is alleged to have occurred while the person was **“otherwise serving a sentence”** for any indictable offence.

In *Application for Bail by Allen Matemberere* [2018] VSC 762 the adult applicant had been charged with a series of offences related to armed robbery. Shortly before offending the applicant had received a 12 month adjourned undertaking without conviction pursuant to s.75 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* for offending including breaches of the **BA**. The question arose whether the subsequent offending had occurred while the applicant was **“serving a sentence”** for the purpose of s.4AA(2)(c)(v) of the **BA**. While acknowledging that his interpretation could give rise to seemingly odd consequences, Weinberg JA adopted the reasoning of Kaye J in *WBM v Chief Commissioner of Police* (2010) 27 VR 469, 475 and held that the applicant was indeed **“serving a sentence”.** Accordingly, the applicant had to satisfy the exceptional circumstances threshold if he was to be granted bail. He did not satisfy that test and bail was refused. At [30]-[31] his Honour said:

“In my opinion, the entire tenor of the **BA**, in its present form, manifests a legislative intention to make it significantly more difficult for individuals who allegedly offend again, having previously been dealt with for other offences, to be granted bail. The extrinsic material, to which I was referred, uses the term ‘undergo’ as synonymous with ‘serve’, and it is in that sense that I think s 4AA(2)(c)(v) should be construed

I accept that this interpretation can give rise to seemingly odd consequences. For example, an offender who is fined is plainly not serving a sentence. That is true, even if he or she is given time to pay, or can pay, by instalments. Yet, an adjourned bond under s 75, which theoretically is more lenient than a fine, produces the paradoxical result that a further offence during the period of that bond triggers the exceptional circumstances requirement for bail, whereas the fine does not. That seems to me to be an inexorable result of the language the legislature has chosen to use.”

Commencing on 25/03/2024 new s.4AA(5) **BA** provides that an accused released on an undertaking under s.72 or s.75 of the *Sentencing Act 1991* is not at large awaiting sentence and is not serving a sentence for the purposes of s.4AA(2)(c) **BA**. This new s.4AA(5) reverses the contrary interpretation of Weinberg JA in *Application for Bail by Allen Matemberere* [2018] VSC 762 and of Kaye J in *WBM v Chief Commissioner of Police* (2010) 27 VR 469, 475.

By analogy, a child who is the subject of a current unaccountable undertaking, accountable undertaking or good behaviour bond pursuant to paragraphs (b) to (d) of s.360(1) of the CYFA – orders which fit within the definition of “sentence” in ss.3(1) & 360-362 of the CYFA – ought presumably be regarded as falling within new s.4AA(5) even though these sentences are not expressly referred to in that section. It would seem hard to reconcile with the principles in the CYFA if Parliament had intended that a child sentenced under the CYFA was to be treated more harshly in this respect than a person – usually an adult – sentenced under the *Sentencing Act 1991*.

In *Re LW* [2022] VSC 567 the 18 year old Aboriginal applicant was granted bail on charges of robbery, unlawful assault, assault in company, assault by kicking, assault with a weapon and theft. At the time of the alleged offending he was serving a youth supervision order (YSO) which had been ordered without conviction. After distinguishing the case of *Re KP* [2018] VSC 436, Fox J held that the applicant was required to show exceptional circumstances pursuant to s.4AA(2)(c)(v) of the **BA**, holding at [48]-[49]:

“A YSO is imposed on an offender by a court as punishment for a crime or crimes. It is a sentence under the CYFA that may be imposed by the Children’s Court, or the County or Supreme Courts. If imposed by the higher courts, it is a sentence as defined in the CPA. It is undoubtedly a ‘sentence’ within the meaning of the Bail Act.

A person is ‘serving a sentence’ if they are undergoing the punishment imposed. The applicant was serving his sentence, being his YSO, at the time of the alleged offending in respect of which he sought bail. Further, he was ‘serving a sentence’ for two Schedule 2 offences, namely attempted armed robbery and persistent breach of an interim intervention order.”

Although her Honour did formally adopt the reasoning of Weinberg JA in the case of *Allen Matemberere* [2018] VSC 762 – reasoning which has since been negated by new s.4AA(5) **BA** –there appears to be nothing in new s.4AA(5) which would now warrant a different outcome in the circumstances of the *Re LW* case. It appears to the writer that an applicant for bail who is on probation, a youth supervision order, a youth attendance order or a youth control order imposed in relation to any Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence may also be deemed to be **“serving a sentence”** at the time of the subsequent offending within the meaning of s.4AA(2)(c)(v).

However, in *Re Aguer Goback and Goback Goback* [2022] VSC 229 the 19 year old applicant Aguer was at the time of the alleged aggravated burglary subject to a current youth attendance order for Schedule 2 offences. Niall JA accepted – without hearing argument – the position adopted by the Crown and the applicant that Aguer was not **“serving a sentence”** and hence was subject to the **compelling reason** test, not the **exceptional circumstances** test.  His Honour did not give reasons other than saying at [12]: “Given that this was the agreed position of the parties, I will proceed on that basis.”

We are thus faced with conflicting decisions of the Supreme Court. That of Fox J was a reasoned decision after hearing argument on the precise legal issue. That of Niall JA was not. The writer prefers the interpretation of Fox J and considers in the circumstances that application of the principle of *stare decisis* means that the decision of Niall JA is not binding on lower courts but the judgment of Fox J is.

### **9.2.7 Relevance of ‘risk’ in determining ‘exceptional circumstances’/‘compelling reason’**

Between 2005 & 2018 there had been ongoing judicial controversy as to whether a bail determination involved a ‘two step’ test or the ‘one step’ test first enunciated by Maxwell P in *Re Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 at [17]:

“I think it is important to make clear that once the applicant for bail shows cause that his detention is not justified, that *is* the end of the inquiry. There is no second step. Nor, therefore, is there any shift of onus. Where s.4(4) applied, the applicant bears the onus from start to finish, of showing that his/her detention is not justified.”

The dilemma has now been substantially resolved by Parliament. As and from 01/07/2018 the bail process is now defined as a ‘two-step’ process as detailed in **Part 9.0 & section 9.2.4** and the associated flow charts. However, there have been several subsequent cases in which ‘risk’ has been held also to have relevance to the first step of determining whether ‘exceptional circumstances’ or a ‘compelling reason’ has been shown.

In granting bail in *Re Gloury-Hyde* [2018] VSC 393 – a judgment handed down 17 days after the commencement of the ‘two-step’ amendments to the *Bail Act 1977* and summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.1** below – Priest JA had stated at [29]-[30] [emphasis added]:

“**As I have mentioned, the applicant is not required to show an absence of unacceptable risk, the burden of establishing an unacceptable risk resting with the prosecutor…**

The concept of exceptional circumstances is an elusive one...But, as Beach JA observed in *Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 at [46], it is well established that exceptional circumstances for the purposes of the Act may, in an appropriate case, consist of a combination of a number of circumstances relating both to the strength of the prosecution case against the applicant and the personal circumstances of the applicant: see also *DPP v Cozzi* (2005) 12 VR 211 at [22]-[25]. **One matter that has often been regarded as important in this context, is the absence of factors pointing to the applicant presenting an unacceptable risk in any of the ways contemplated by the Act.**”

In *Re ER* [2022] VSC 88 – a case summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.1** in which bail was granted to a 17 year old – Kaye JA expanded on this dicta, saying at [30] [emphasis added]:

“**One matter, that is commonly regarded as important in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established, is the presence or absence of factors which might point to the applicant presenting as an unacceptable risk in any of the ways specified in s.4E(1) of the [Act]: *Re Gloury–Hyde***[**[2018] VSC 393**](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2018/393.html)**, [30] (Priest JA)**.”

In *Re RN* [2023] VSC 9 – a case summarised **subsection 9.4.1.2** in which bail was refused to a 13 year old boy facing 181 separate charges in 19 unresolved briefs – Priest JA adopted this expanded version of the dicta he had originally formulated in *Re Gloury‑Hyde*, saying at [19] [emphasis added]:

“With respect to the nature of exceptional circumstances for the purposes of the Act, I adopt the following observations made by Kaye JA in *ER* [2022] VSC 88 at [30]:

The content of the term ‘exceptional circumstances’ has been discussed in a number of decisions of this Court. In effect, the applicant must establish circumstances that are ‘right out of the ordinary’, so that they are exceptional to the ordinary circumstances which would otherwise entitle an applicant to bail: *DPP v Muhaidat* [[2004] VSC 17](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2004/17.html), [13] (Kaye J); *Re Brown* [[2019] VSC 751](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2019/751.html), [65]–[66] (Lasry J); *Re Tong* [[2020] VSC 141](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2020/141.html), [18]–[19] (Tinney J). It is well established that exceptional circumstances may comprise a combination of circumstances which, individually, might not themselves be considered to be exceptional. **One matter, that is commonly regarded as important in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established, is the presence or absence of factors which might point to the applicant presenting as an unacceptable risk in any of the ways specified in s.4E(1) of the [Act]: *Re Gloury–Hyde***[**[2018] VSC 393**](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2018/393.html)**, [30] (Priest JA)**.”

In *Re Tata* [2024] VSC 378 – a case summarised in **subsection 9.4.2.4** in which bail had been refused to a 62 year old applicant charged with alleged family violence offending against his former partner and daughters – Tinney J said at [56]-[58] [emphasis added]:

[56] “**Turning to the question of risk, which is a matter which would appropriately be considered in the first step of the bail process, as well as a stand-alone matter if the second step is reached,** I accept that there are a number of circumstances which would tend to control the risk the applicant would pose. However, the offending alleged here, as stated earlier, is disturbing, and occurred in the context of a severe state of intoxication experienced by a man who for years has reduced himself to that sort of state on a regular basis. The applicant has, in reality, received no treatment for the severe problem he has. The first real test of his newfound and developing resolve would not come until he left a custodial setting. The imposition of a condition that he not consume alcohol on bail might be seen as an unrealistic demand, setting him up to fail. A recurrence of excessive drinking may, conceivably, rekindle in him the powerful emotions at the heart of his conduct on the day of the alleged offending.

[57] As was said by the Court of Appeal in *FT (a pseudonym) v The King* [2024] VSCA 90 at [96]:

‘It may be accepted that, depending on the circumstances, some risks of offending on bail, even a high risk, may not be unacceptable for the purposes of the Act. The calculus involves an assessment of the probability of the risk eventuating and the likely harm if it does. Here, both those integers weigh heavily against the appellant.’

[58] Even if the probability of the applicant seeking to renew hostilities with his daughters and former partner and again seeking to harm them may not be viewed as high, **the likely harm should the risk eventuate is catastrophic, and in my view, the risk is an important consideration where an assessment of a compelling reason is concerned**.”

### **9.2.8 Meaning of “strength of the prosecution case”**

**Section 3AAA** **BA** contains a non-exhaustive list of matters that a bail decision maker must take into account (where relevant) if the **BA** requires the decision maker to take into account the ‘**surrounding circumstances**’. One of those matters – contained in **s.3AAA(1)(b)** – is “**the strength of the prosecution case**”. In *Re Chau* [2024] VSC 387 the 45 year old applicant with a significant criminal history was charged with murder and other charges. Submitting that exceptional circumstances were established by a combination of factors the applicant had placed particular reliance on an asserted lack of strength of the prosecution case on the charge of murder. In rejecting this submission and refusing bail Elliott J reviewed a number of relevant cases, saying at [44]-[57]:

[44] “In assessing the strength of the prosecution case for the purposes of an application for bail, it is not the court’s role to analyse ‘in detail each piece of evidence to determine its likely admissibility and importance to a jury’, or to express ‘any firm or concluded view’ on the matter: *Formica & Forni v Victoria Police* [2020] VSC 719, [68]. This is due to, among other things, the fact that the court has ‘not had the benefit of seeing what effect cross-examination might or might not have in relation to evidence that might be regarded as critical’: *Re CD* [2017] VSC 721, [23]; *Re Sam* [2017] VSC 91, [24]. However, it is necessary, in having regard to the surrounding circumstances, to form a broad view about whether, ‘taking the prosecution case at its highest, it might be regarded as a strong or weak case’: *Re Wetzler* [2023] VSC 626, [71]. See also *Bail Act*, s 3AAA(1)(b); *FT v The King* [2024] VSCA 90, [78], [83].

[45] Naturally, each case must be decided according to its own particular facts and circumstances. However, it is of some assistance to refer to a number of other cases where bail has been sought when an accused was facing a charge of murder.

[46] In *Re Frank* [2018] VSC 718 at [43]-[44] & [51] Champion J found that while the applicant had an arguable defence, the case against him could not reasonably be described as weak. It also could not be said that there was undue delay ‘beyond the normal limits’, and matters personal to the applicant’s situation, including the availability of a static residence and community assistance, did not satisfy his Honour that exceptional circumstances had been established: see [46]-[47] & [51].

[47] In *Re Lacey* [2015] VSC 611, Priest JA did not consider the prosecution case in relation to the charge of murder to be weak. His Honour noted at [9] that it would be ‘open to a jury to conclude that the applicant was present at the time the deceased was killed and acted “as part of a joint criminal enterprise, or was otherwise complicit’. In his Honour’s view, none of the other factors relied upon, including the applicant’s limited prior criminal history, family support and stable accommodation and the offer a substantial bail guarantee, alone or in combination, went ‘beyond the kind of circumstances encountered in the ordinary case’: see [7]-[8] & [10].

[48] In *Re Sam* [2017] VSC 91, Beach JA found at [25] that the prosecution case against the applicant for murder was circumstantial, and was neither unusually strong nor unusually weak. Whilst concluding at [24] that the applicant had reasonable prospects of being acquitted, his Honour was of the view that the delay was not exceptional, and the remaining matters relied on by the applicant, including a stable place of residence, family support and the fact that she had no criminal history, did not amount to exceptional circumstances either alone or in combination: see [17] & [27].

[49] In *Re CD* [2017] VSC 721, Beach JA held at [24] that on the material tendered for an application for bail, all that could be said in relation to the prosecution case for murder was that it ‘may or may not succeed at trial against the applicant’. The delay asserted by the applicant could not be described as exceptional. None of the other factors raised were exceptional in and of themselves, nor did they add sufficiently to the grounds concerning the strength of the prosecution case and delay to constitute exceptional circumstances: see [25]-[26].

[50] Conversely, in *Re Wetzler* [2023] VSC 626, Champion J held at [71] that the prosecution case for murder against the applicant did not ‘appear to be particularly strong or compelling’. Taken in combination with, in particular, the fact the applicant had no criminal history and a delay of up to 2 years was anticipated before a trial might commence, his Honour was satisfied that exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail existed: see [73]-[75].

[51] Similarly, in *Re Nguyen* [2022] VSC 836, Lasry J regarded the evidence before him on the charge of murder to be, at the stage at which the application for bail was made, ‘effectively nonexistent’: [74(b)]. His Honour observed that he could not see ‘how any inference could be drawn on the evidence which would implicate the applicant in the charge of murder’. In addition, the anticipated delay in bringing the applicant to trial, ‘whilst of itself perhaps not inordinate’, would be ‘of the order of some two years and potentially longer’: see [74(d)]. When these factors were considered in combination with the offer of a substantial bail guarantee and the availability of a stable place of residence and community treatment and supervision services for the applicant’s schizoaffective disorder, his Honour was satisfied that exceptional circumstances existed: see [27]-[29] & [34].

[52] In *Armstrong v The Queen* [2013] VSC 111, Lasry J concluded at [25] & [33] that the prosecution case for murder against the applicant could not be accurately described as strong. Given the likely delay of at least 18 months in the matter coming to trial, as well as the personal circumstances of the applicant, including the existence of medical conditions and the lack of any criminal history, his Honour was also satisfied that exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail existed in that case: see [27]-[29] & [34].

[53] More recently, in *Re Tilley* [2024] VSC 274, the court found at [49] that, even ‘viewing the evidence at its highest’, there was ‘scant evidence upon which [the applicant] could be incriminated as being part of any conspiracy to murder’ at the time at which her application for bail was made. Viewing the weaknesses in the prosecution case in combination with the applicant’s ‘lack of criminal history, her personal circumstances, the availability of stable accommodation and full time employment, the availability of support through the Bail Safe Program, and the offer of a not insignificant bail guarantee”, exceptional circumstances were found to exist.

[54] In the circumstances of the present application, there is some complexity associated with the case for murder against Chau. It is ‘not an open and shut case’: *Re Sam* [2017] VSC 91, [24]. The prosecution case is not that Chau was the shooter, rather it is put on the basis of complicity. That is, the prosecution alleges that Chau was part of an enterprise, agreement, or understanding to kill or cause really serious injury to Loulanting…

[55] There are clearly triable issues in relation to the charge of murder. However, taking each of the matters raised by Chau into account and in light of all the relevant circumstances including the surrounding circumstances, on the material tendered as part of this bail application including the extensive details provided in the summary of prosecution opening, it cannot be concluded that the case against Chau on the basis of complicity is weak.

[56] Based on the evidence of the circumstances leading up to the confrontation on 11 July 2022, the phone mapping and closed-circuit television footage relevant to the affray that allegedly occurred shortly after the killing, text message exchanges, intercepted phone calls and witness testimony, it would be open to a jury to conclude that there was in fact a plan by the 4 co-accused, including Chau, to ambush and kill Loulanting or cause him really serious injury, and to find that Chau was present at the time Loulanting suffered the injuries which subsequently led to his death.

[57] Ultimately the prosecution case is ‘not so lacking in strength as to form a separate basis (either looked at alone or in combination with the other surrounding circumstances) upon which one might conclude that exceptional circumstances have been made out’: *Re Zayneh* [2023] VSC 470, [35].”

### **9.2.9 Bail application where possible family violence issue**

Section 5AAAA(1) of the **BA** requires a bail decision maker considering the release on bail of an accused to make inquiries of the prosecutor as to whether there is in force a family violence intervention order or a family violence safety notice or a recognised DVO made against the accused.

In s.3 **family violence offence** is defined as–

1. an offence against ss.37(2), 37A(2), 123(2), 123A(2) or 125A(1) of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*; or
2. an offence where the conduct of the accused is family violence.

Section 5AAAA(2) of the **BA** requires a bail decision maker considering the release on bail of an accused charged with a family violence offence to consider–

1. whether, if the accused were released on bail, there would be a risk that the accused would commit family violence; and
2. whether that risk could be reduced by the imposition of a condition or the making of a family violence intervention order.

In *Re Blackmore* [2021] VSC 93 the accused was subjected to an interim FVIO on being granted bail.

### **9.2.10 Requirement for reasons when bail granted**

Section 12A of the **BA** requires a court granting bail in circumstances where under s.4AA **BA**–

* the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test applies; or
* the step 1 – show compelling reason test applies–

to include in the order granting bail a statement of reasons for granting bail.

Otherwise, a bail decision maker must record and transmit a statement of reasons in Form 5 of Schedule 1 as required by reg.9 of the *Bail Regulations 2022*. For further information see **section 9.5.5** below.

### **9.2.11 Bail Regulations 2022**

The *Bail Regulations 2022* [S.R. No.116/2022] were made under s.33 of the *Bail Act 1977* on 18/10/2022 and came into operation on 10/12/2022. They revoked and replaced the *Bail Regulations 2012* and subsequent amendments in 2013, 2016, 2017 & 2018.

The 2022 Regulations were amended as and from 25/03/2024 by the *Bail Amendment Regulations 2024* [S.R. No.8/2024] whose objective is–

1. to make changes consequential to the *Bail Amendment Act 2023* by–
2. replacing references to sureties with references to bail guarantees or bail guarantors;
3. removing references to repealed offences previously in ss.\*\*;
4. updating references to undertakings;
5. updating descriptions of the unacceptable risk test;
6. updating descriptions of when only a court may grant bail; and
7. to make other minor and technical changes.

The major objective of the *Bail Regulations 2022* (as amended) is to prescribe forms to be used for the purposes of the *Bail Act 1977*. There are 21 prescribed forms in Schedule 1 whose headings are detailed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Form 1 | Bail undertaking |
| Form 2 | Bail undertaking for attendance at trial |
| Form 3 | Undertaking by parent or other person when child does not have the capacity or understanding to give a bail undertaking |
| Form 4 | Notice of obligations of bail |
| Form 5 | Statement of reasons for granting bail |
| Form 6 | Affidavit of justification for bail by bail guarantor |
| Form 7 | Warrant to arrest person released on bail if bail guarantor gives false information in support of bail undertaking |
| Form 8 | Statement for a person in custody when bail is refused who is a child, vulnerable adult, Aboriginal person or person arrested on an enforcement warrant |
| Form 9 | Statement for arrested person who objects to amount or conditions of bail |
| Form 10 | Statement for a person in police custody when bail is refused |
| Form 11 | Notice of deposit to secure payment of any penalty imposed by the Magistrates' or Children's Court for certain offences under the Summary Offences Act 1966 |
| Form 12 | Further application for bail/Application by person on bail for variation of amount or conditions of bail |
| Form 13 | Notice to informant and Director of Public Prosecutions or prosecutor of further application for bail/Application for an order to vary amount or conditions of bail |
| Form 14 | Application by informant or Director of Public Prosecutions for an order to vary amount of bail, vary conditions of bail or impose conditions of bail |
| Form 15 | Application by informant or Director of Public Prosecutions for an order to revoke bail |
| Form 16 | Notice to bail guarantor of application by person on bail for an order to vary amount or conditions of bail |
| Form 17 | Application by bail guarantor to be discharged from liability with respect to bail undertaking |
| Form 18 | Warrant to arrest if a bail guarantor applies to be discharged from liability with respect to bail undertaking |
| Form 19 | Warrant to arrest to amend conditions of bail |
| Form 20 | Warrant to arrest if person has been released with insufficient security or with security which has become insufficient |
| Form 21 | Warrant to arrest if person released on bail undertaking fails to attend |

Unless an accused is awaiting trial, the prescribed form of bail undertaking by the accused when bail is granted is in Form 1. That is used for both children and adults in cases which have been adjourned for further hearing in the Children’s Court and the Magistrates’ Court respectively. Under the former *Bail Regulations 2012* there was an additional paragraph 1A in Form 1 which enabled an undertaking to be given by an adult if the child did not have the capacity or understanding to enter the undertaking: see s.16B of the **BA**. That situation is now covered by Form 3 which applies only where the accused is a child who does not have the requisite capacity or understanding to enter an undertaking in Form 1. Since few children are committed for trial in the County or Supreme Court, Form 2 has limited application in the Children’s Court.

Although all of 21 Forms could theoretically be used in the Children’s Court, it is very rare for a child to be released on bail with one or more bail guarantees and even rarer for a child to be required to provide a deposit of money as a condition of bail. Hence, Forms 6, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18 & 20 have extremely limited application in practice in the Children’s Court.

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## **9.3 Bail – History, Questions, Factors & Principles**

**History**

In *Renate Mokbel v DPP (Vic) and DPP (Cth)* [2006] VSC 487 at [33]-[34] Gillard J said:

“English law has for many hundreds of years recognized the right of an accused person to bail. It is a right recognized in Australian law. The *Bill of Rights of 1689* (Imp) provided that excessive bail was not permitted and that the conditions of bail should not be set to deter the release of the accused pending trial. The right to a grant of bail is enshrined in s.4(1) of the *Bail Act* 1977. However, that right may be abrogated in certain circumstances. An accused person who is bailed is obliged to comply with the conditions of the bail, the most important of which is the requirement to attend at the place and on the date specified in the bail order.”

In *Bail Application by Michael Paterson* [2006] VSC 268 at [13]-[21] Gillard J traced the history of the law relating to bail in Victoria, noting at [20] that “the common law, in so far as it is not dealt with by any provision of the [**BA**] still applies” and at [47] that “the *Bail Act* does not constitute a complete code of the law relating to bail”. See also *Renate Mokbel v DPP (Vic) and DPP (Cth)* [2006] VSC 487 at [40], *R v Anderson* [1978] VR 322 and *R v Clarkson* [1981] VR 165.

**Questions**

The cardinal rule is that there are no overriding rules. Each case has to be considered on its own merits. The bail decision maker hearing a bail application must consider the following questions-

1. Is the accused charged with an offence which requires him or her to show **exceptional circumstances** or to show **a compelling reason** that justifies the grant of bail?

2. Is the accused an **unacceptable risk** if released on bail of–

* + endangering the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or
  + interfering with a witness or otherwise obstructing the course of justice in any matter; or
  + failing to surrender into custody in accordance with the bail undertaking?

In hearing a bail application by a child the judicial officer must also take into account the 13 matters detailed in s.3B(1) of the **BA**, four of which are in largely identical terms to the sentencing considerations for a child contained in ss.362(1)(a) to (d) of the **CYFA**. See **section 9.2.2** above.

**Factors**

Factors which may militate against the granting of bail, either alone or in combination, include-

* nature & seriousness of offence(s)
* prior criminal history
* history of failing to appear
* current level of drug dependency
* number of current sets of bail and on what sorts of charges
* risk of flight
* risk of committing further offences
* risk to witnesses/co-accused
* with serious assaults: possibility that victim may die
* with drugs: quantity, purity, value
* whether the alleged offending breaches any current orders, e.g. parole, probation, youth supervision order, youth attendance order
* strength of prosecution case
* likelihood of term of imprisonment if charge(s) proved
* domicile

Factors which may militate in favour of the granting of bail, either alone or in combination, include-

* nature & seriousness of offence(s)
* weakness of prosecution case
* age
* delay
* lack of or minimal prior criminal history
* lack of or minimal history of failing to appear;
* number of current sets of bail and on what sorts of charges
* not a risk of flight - factors tying to jurisdiction
* not an unacceptable risk of committing further offences
* not an unacceptable risk to witnesses/co-accused
* appropriateness or otherwise of detention - e.g. psychological/psychiatric issues, disability etc.
* state of health, both physical and mental
* home & family
* school or employment
* support
* ongoing treatment in place
* conditions in cells
* cultural factors, e.g. Koori heritage, language etc.

**Principles**

1. The guiding principles in the **BA** are contained in s.1B(1):

“(1AA) The Parliament recognises the overarching importance of maximising, to the greatest extent possible, the safety of the community and persons affected by crime.

(1) The Parliament also recognises the importance of–

1. ...
2. taking account of the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty; and
3. promoting fairness, transparency and consistency in bail decision making; and
4. promoting public understanding of bail practices and procedures.”

Section 1B(2) provides that it is the intention of Parliament that the **BA** be applied and interpreted having regard to the principles in s.1B(1).

In *Re Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 Beach JA said at [32]:

“Immediately it should be observed that, in applying and interpreting the Act, s.1B requires regard to be had to two competing considerations: on the one hand, safety of the community; and on the other, the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty. In an individual case there will be competing factors that tell in favour of bail (s.1B(1)(b) of the Act), and others that tell against a grant (s.1B(1)(a)).

1. A case cited as *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 involved four unrelated applications for bail which raised common issues. In the very detailed judgment, part of which considered the relationship between bail and human rights, Bell J discussed a number of principles relating to bail together with some illustrative cases. These principles include:

* **Human rights – Individual facts and circumstances must be properly considered:**

[3] “Everyone charged with a criminal offence is presumed to be innocent and the prosecution must prove the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt. Consistently with that presumption and prosecutorial onus of proof [see *Lee v NSW Crimes Commission* (2013) 87 ALJR 1082 per Kiefel J], bail ensures the liberty and other human rights of persons arrested on criminal charges. In Victoria, those rights are to be found in the common law and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*. The provisions of the *Bail Act* governing the entitlement of accused persons to bail and the conditions on which it may be granted have been designed to take those rights into account. Liberty and human rights under the common law and the Charter are the proper context within which those provisions are to be understood and applied. Because these rights are not absolute, they do not prevent the refusal of bail to an accused who, for example, represents an unacceptable risk of failing to appear at trial or pre-trial hearings, committing offences on bail, endangering the safety or welfare of the community or interfering with witnesses.”

[8] “Turning from the common law to the Charter, it specifies the human rights to freedom of movement in s 12 and liberty and security of the person in s 21. Each of these rights is potentially engaged by the provisions of the *Bail Act* and when deciding whether or not to grant bail to a person under arrest on criminal charges and impose conditions of bail.” See also ss.10(c), 13(a), 16(1), 19(2) & 25(1) of the *Charter*.

[20] “It can be seen that decisions about entitlement to bail and the conditions of bail potentially can raise serious human rights issues which require consideration by the court or decision-maker concerned. In that consideration, it is important to note that, under s 7(2), the human rights in the Charter are not absolute and may be subject to limits prescribed by law which are reasonable and demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. By that provision, a limitation may be found justified after the following factors are considered:

(a) the nature of the right;

(b) the importance of the purpose of the limitation;

(c) the nature and extent of the limitation;

(d) the relationship between the limitation and its purpose; and

(e) any less restrictive means reasonably available to achieve the purpose that the limitation seeks to achieve.”

[29] “As can be seen from the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and that of Refshauge J in *Seears* [2013] ACTSC 187, a fundamental requirement of human rights law in the context of bail is that the individual facts and circumstances must be properly considered before the severe step of depriving the accused of his or her liberty is taken. The need to approach the determination of applications for bail in this way is well established in this court. For example, in *Re Moloney* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 31/10/1990] Vincent J was determining an application to which the exceptional circumstances test applied. Of the need to take all of the circumstances into account, his Honour said at p.1:

‘A number of decisions which have been handed down by judges in this court … make it clear that such circumstances may exist as a result of the interaction of a variety of factors which of themselves might not be regarded as exceptional. What is ultimately of significance is that, viewed as a whole, the circumstances be regarded as exceptional to the extent that, taking into account the very serious nature of the charge to which they are applicable, the making of an order admitting the person to bail would be justified.’

Applying that approach in *Re Whiteside* [1999] VSC 413, another exceptional circumstances case, Warren J (as the Chief Justice then was) stressed at [14] that ‘each case will be different and each set of facts and circumstances will need to be considered and weighed up before determining whether or not exceptional circumstances are made out’. As we will see, this approach is generally followed not just in the application of the exceptional circumstances test but also in cases to which the show cause and unacceptable risk tests…apply.”

For further discussion of the relationship between bail and human rights, see **sections 9.4.4 & 9.4.10**.

* **The Primary Purpose of Bail:**

[30] “Under the *Bail Act*, the court is required to take into account a number of matters which always include whether the accused represents an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail, committing offences on bail, endangering the safety or welfare of the public or interfering with witnesses (s 4(2)(d)). **Without in any way doubting the importance of the other considerations, the primary purpose of bail is to ensure the attendance of the accused at his or her trial and the associated preliminary hearings**: *Cozzi* (2005) 12 VR 211, 217 [33] (Coldrey J); *R v Watson* (1947) 64 WN (NSW) 100 (Herron J), approved *R v Light* [1954] VLR 152, 155-7 (Sholl J). As was held in *R v Mahoney-Smith* [1967] 2 NSWR 154 in the Supreme Court of New South Wales by O’Brien J, ‘the grant or refusal of bail is determined fundamentally on the probability or otherwise of the applicant appearing at Court as and when required’: *Mahoney-Smith* at 158. *R v Sefton* [1917] VLR 259 was decided in our court under the common law. Cussen J held at 262 that, in ‘ordinary cases’, bail was granted ‘if by taking recognisances … appearance can be practically ensured’. In *R v Light* [1954] VLR 152, also a common law case, Sholl J held at 157 this to be the ‘first matter of consideration’. It was described as ‘the primary question’ by Gillard J in *Re Paterson* (2006) 163 A Crim R 122, 127 and by Eames J in *Director of Public Prosecutions v Ghiller* [2000] VSC 435 at [43]. Both of these cases were decided under the *Bail Act.* This dicta from *Ghiller* was cited with approval in *Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 at [15] per Maxwell P and in *Re Metekingi* [2012] VSC 366 at [22] per Robson J.”

See also *Bail Application by Michael Paterson* [2006] VSC 268 where Gillard J stated at [53]: “[T]he primary matter in any bail application concerns the question of the accused person answering bail. That, in my view, is the most important issue and always has been.”

* **Safety of the Community:**

[33] “An important purpose of the criminal law is to ensure the safety of the community. Members of the public look to the government and the courts for protection against crime and the just punishment of offenders. While the first consideration in bail applications is whether the accused will appear to answer the charges, whether he or she would commit further offences on bail, endanger the safety or welfare of the public or interfere with witnesses are mandatory statutory considerations (s 4(2)(d)). This too is the position at common law, as expounded in leading authorities such as *Light* [1954] VLR 152, 155-7 (Sholl J), followed in *Paterson* (2006) 163 A Crim R 122, 127-8 [30] (Gillard J).and *R v Watson* (1947) 64 WN (NSW) 100, 102 (Herron J).”

* **The Principle of Personal Liberty is Wider than Freedom from Unlawful Detention:**

[5] “As to personal liberty, it has foundational significance in the scheme of the common law. This was explained by Mason & Brennan JJ in *Williams v The Queen* (1986) 161 CLR 278 at 292…”

[7] “In relation to bail, it is apposite to recollect that the principle of personal liberty is wider than freedom from unlawful detention. It encompasses freedom from unlawful restraint upon movement as well.” See *Ruddock v Vadarlis* (2001) 110 FCR 491 per French J.

[8] “Turning from the common law to the Charter, it specifies the human rights to freedom of movement in s 12 and liberty and security of the person in s 21. Each of these rights is potentially engaged by the provisions of the *Bail Act* and when deciding whether or not to grant bail to a person under arrest on criminal charges and impose conditions of bail.” See also ss.10(c), 13(a), 16(1), 19(2) & 25(1) of the Charter.

3. Unless there are unusual or compelling reasons for the Crown not being in an informed position, the prosecution should be ready to deal with a bail application once a charge is laid. In *R v Griffey* [2006] VSC 86*,* where the applicant was charged with murder of her estranged husband, the “main thrust of the argument presented by the Crown was that the bail application had been made with almost indecent haste”, namely 22 days after arrest and before the statements of witnesses were available. In granting bail, King J strongly rejected this submission and said that in a number of bail applications that she had heard in the Supreme Court the summary of the case prepared by the informant was the only material that was available. Her Honour continued at [7]‑[9]:

“Once the police have made a decision to arrest and charge a citizen, it cannot be that the Crown can then say, we are taken by surprise, we’re not ready to argue the merits of the application…

Bail is the right of an accused person. It shall be refused only on certain criteria and with certain offences, but it is clearly the right of a person to apply for bail at any time. No applicant must wait until the Crown say that they are ready and that this is a suitable time for them to have the application heard. The court must presume therefore that unless there are unusual or compelling reasons for the Crown not being in an informed position, for example awaiting the results of toxicology or DNA testing, those who provide the Crown with the information necessary to deal with these matters, that is the police officers involved in the decision to arrest and charge any applicant, must be able to provide to the Crown a clear, cogent synopsis of the basis of that arrest and the strength of the case against the applicant.”

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## **9.4 Bail – 'Exceptional circumstances', 'Show compelling reason', 'Unacceptable risk'**

In *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [34] Bell J said:

“Reflecting the importance of the presumption of innocence and the prosecutorial onus of proof as well as the right of all persons to liberty and freedom of movement at common law, s 4(1) has always provided, and still provides, that accused persons being held in custody have a presumptive entitlement to bail, as at common law: *Light* [1954] VLR 152, 157 (Sholl J). However, the presumptive entitlement to bail is displaced in the circumstances specified in [s 4A (exceptional circumstances), s.4C (show compelling reason) & ss.4B/4D/4E (unacceptable risk)].”

### **9.4.1 Exceptional circumstances**

In a case which falls within s.4A of the **BA**, the burden is on the accused to satisfy the bail decision maker as to the existence of **exceptional circumstances**. It is now clear from ss.4D & 4E that if the bail decision maker is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist for a person accused of a Schedule 1 offence, the bail decision maker must nevertheless refuse bail if satisfied by the prosecution that there is an **unacceptable risk** that the accused, if released on bail, would–

* endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or
* interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or
* fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail.

In *DPP (Cth) v Tang & Others* (1995) 83 A Crim R 593 at 596 {MC11/96}, Beach J said:

"'Exceptional' is a word commonly used in legislation. One definition of it in the New Shorter Oxford dictionary is 'of the nature of, or forming an exception, unusual, out of the ordinary, special'. Webster's dictionary contains the following definition: 'Relating to, or forming an exception, out of the ordinary, out of the ordinary course, unusual, common, extraordinary'. In my opinion it does not matter which of these definitions one chooses to accept."

However in *DPP v Tong* [2000] VSC 451 {MC43/00} at [23]-[24] McDonald J eschewed reliance on a definition in favour of a more instinctive approach:

"[23] In my view it is not appropriate for the court to seek to define the expression 'exceptional circumstances' as applicable to s. 4(2)(a) or (aa) of the *Bail Act 1977*. It is more appropriate for the court to examine the facts in each case in order to determine whether 'exceptional circumstances' exist as would warrant the grant of bail to a person to whom s. 4(2)(a) or s. 4(2)(aa) of the *Bail Act 1977* applies.

[24] In *Beljajev v DPP* the Full Court in its judgment said at pp.34-35:

'A decision to grant or refuse bail must necessarily be to a very considerable extent a matter of impression or an instinctive synthesis of the considerations involved.'"

In *Re Michael Barbaro* [2004] VSC 404 at [8] and *MacDonald v DPP* [2004] VSC 431 at [7] Morris J adopted the same approach, saying in the latter case: "I agree with decisions of this Court which are to the effect that it is dangerous to seek to define what is meant by 'exceptional circumstances'."

In *DPP (Vic) v Cozzi* (2005) 12 VR 211; [2005] VSC 195 at [18]-[19] Coldrey J also eschewed a definition-based approach and approved the approach adopted by Vincent J in *Moloney’s Case*:

“[18] The concept of exceptional circumstances is, itself, an illusive one. The phrase itself is not defined in the *Bail Act* 1977, although some Judges have essayed a definition. In *Tang & Ors* (1995) 83 A Crim R 593, 596 Beach J made reference to dictionary definitions of the word ‘exceptional’. His Honour found that whatever definition is used, the applicant for bail ‘bears the onus of establishing that there is some unusual or uncommon circumstance surrounding his case before a court is justified in releasing him on bail.’ In the course of argument the decision of Kaye J in the case of *In the Matter of a Bail Application by Ismail Muhaidat* [2004] VSC 17 was cited. In it his Honour remarked:

‘The question of what are exceptional circumstances have been canvassed before. Effectively the applicant has to establish circumstances right out of the ordinary. They have to be exceptional to the ordinary circumstances which would otherwise entitle the applicant to bail.’ (p.2)

[19] On the other hand in *Re the Matter of Application for Bail by John Denis Moloney* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 31/10/1990] Vincent J, a most experienced judge, pointed out that it was not possible to identify in any general definition what factual situations constituted exceptional circumstances. His Honour stated:

‘A number of decisions which have been handed down by Judges in this Court, however, make it clear that such circumstances may exist as a result of the interaction of a variety of factors which of themselves might not be regarded as exceptional. What is ultimately of significance is that viewed as a whole, the circumstances can be regarded as exceptional to the extent that, taking into account the very serious nature of the charge to which they are applicable, the making of an order admitting the person to bail would be justified.’”

In *DPP (Vic) v Koumis* [2006] VSC 416 at [28] Coldrey J expanded on his reasoning in *DPP (Vic) v Cozzi* (2005) 12 VR 211:

“In *DPP v Cozzi*, I expressed the view that in considering exceptional circumstances lack of any positive findings in relation to the factors listed in s.4(2)(d) of the Act could be taken into account. However, as is clear in the scheme of the legislation, more is required that the lack of findings of an unacceptable risk before exceptional circumstances may be regarded as having been demonstrated.”

In *Re Sanerive* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 03/07/1986], Vincent J held that in determining whether or not exceptional circumstances exist:

"It is relevant to have regard to the circumstances and strength of the case against the accused. It is necessary to refer to the whole of the situation which exists in each such case and to take into account the general criteria which are employed in the consideration of bail generally."

In *MacDonald v DPP* [2004] VSC 431 at [8] Morris J took the same view: "To look at each circumstance separately and then identify whether that circumstance is exceptional, and then seek to make a conclusion on that basis, is to fail to have regard to the reality that circumstances must be assessed as a whole." See also *DPP (Cth) v Marijan Banda* [2000] VSC 542 per Beach J; *Re Moloney* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 31/10/1990] per Vincent J; *DPP v Justin Noel Waters* [2004] VSC 303 at [8] per Habersberger J; *Tran v DPP* [2004] VSC 296 per Redlich J at [15] citing *R v Cox* [2003] VSC 245; *DPP (Cth) v Thomas* [2005] VSC 85 at [5] per Teague J. In *IMO an Application for Bail by Cardona* [2005] VSC 186 at [14] Kellam J rejected the prosecution contention “that a combination of circumstances cannot constitute exceptional circumstances [as] not consistent with established authority”. In *DPP (Cth) v Stephen Zane Abbott* (1997) 97 A Crim R 19 at 27 {MC2/98} Gillard J said:

“I do not doubt for one moment that in the end the court must consider the totality of factors put forward and consider the question whether in all the circumstances they are exceptional.”

However, it must be noted that in *Abbott’s Case* Gillard J did require the accused to identify each of the component factors upon which he relied as a constituent of 'exceptional circumstances'.

In the case of *CG* [2005] VSC 358R at [19] Kaye J also considered that exceptional circumstances might arise from the totality of individually unexceptional circumstances:

“The *Bail Act* does not define what are exceptional circumstances. Clearly, in order to be exceptional the circumstances must be something which lies out of the ordinary. While previous rulings on bail applications provide some assistance, each case, of necessity, must be determined according to the particular facts of the case. In an appropriate case while no individual circumstance standing alone is exceptional, nonetheless exceptional circumstances may arise from the combined effect of those circumstances working together.”

In relation to exceptional circumstances, Tinney J said in in *Re Afram* [2018] VSC 708 at [24]-[25]:

[24] “The authorities emphasise how difficult it may be to establish the existence of exceptional circumstances. For example, Justice Champion in *Re CT*[2018] VSC 559, a case involving a bail application by a child, stated at [64]:

‘The Act does not define what may amount to exceptional circumstances. It is well established that, ‘in order to be exceptional, the circumstances relied on must be such as to take the case out of the normal, so as to justify the admission of the applicant to bail.’ It has been observed that ‘the hurdle confronted by an applicant in establishing exceptional circumstances is a high one.’ That having been said, it is not an impossible standard to reach.’

[25] Priest JA in *Re Gloury-Hyde* [2018] VSC 393 had this to say:

The concept of exceptional circumstances is an elusive one. But as Beach JA observed in *Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 at [46], it is well established that exceptional circumstances for the purposes of the Act may, in an appropriate case, consist of a combination of a number of circumstances relating both to the strength of the prosecution case against the applicant and the personal circumstances of the applicant. One matter that has often been regarded as important in this context, is the absence of factors pointing to the applicant presenting an unacceptable risk in any of the ways contemplated by the Act.’”

In *Re TP* [2018] VSC 748 the Court held:

* At [33]: Although the provisions considered in *Re CT* have been amended, the term ‘exceptional circumstances’ remains and there is no reason to depart from previous analyses of it.
* At [48]-[51]: Special considerations apply to children, even those charged with serious offending’ specifically s.3B(1)(a) of the **BA** requires the Court to “consider all other options before a child is remanded into custody.”

In *Michael Barbaro's case* the applicant was charged with a string of offences, two of which - cultivation of & trafficking a commercial quantity of cannabis - fell within former s.4(2)(aa) of the **BA**. Counsel for the applicant queried whether there was evidence that the quantity of cannabis alleged to have been cultivated or trafficked was of a commercial quantity. Morris J said at [4]-[5]:

"[A]ssuming that there is a paucity of evidence as to whether the quantity of the drug cultivated or trafficked was of a commercial quantity, it does not follow that this would take the matter outside of the reach of s.4(2)(aa) of the *Bail Act 1977* (and hence mean that exceptional circumstances need not be shown) because that section turns on what the person is *charged* with. In this case Mr Barbaro is charged with two offences that fall within that provision… However, I do accept that if the evidence before the Court casts significant doubt on the likelihood that a person would be convicted of cultivating or trafficking in a drug of commercial quantity, that would be relevant to whether or not exceptional circumstances exist. If this were not so the provisions of s. 4(2)(aa) of the *Bail Act* 1977 could be abused by bringing charges against a person who had cultivated a drug, or had trafficked in a drug, less than a commercial quantity, but specifying in the charge that it was of a commercial quantity in order to trigger a more rigorous test in relation to bail."

Where the prosecution satisfies the judicial officer that the offence charged falls within an 'exceptional circumstances' category, the onus is on the accused to prove that exceptional circumstances exist: *Beljajev v DPP* (1998) 101 A Crim R 362; *DPP (Cth) v Tang* (1995) 83 A Crim R at 595.

In *MacDonald v DPP* [2004] VSC 431 at [9] Morris J held that the matters referred to in s.4(2)(d) of the **BA** relating to unacceptable risk are also relevant to the question of exceptional circumstances. Thus his Honour emphasised that a starting point, but only a starting point, for the determination of whether exceptional circumstances exist might be that there is an acceptable risk that if the applicant was released on bail she will answer bail, not commit offences whilst on bail, not endanger the safety or welfare of members of the public and not interfere with witnesses or otherwise seek to obstruct justice.

In the following three cases the Supreme Court held that the fact that bail was unopposed by the informant was not a conclusive factor. However, in each case the Court did find exceptional circumstances and granted the applicant bail:

* In *Re John Whiteside* [1999] VSC 413 the applicant and co-accused had been charged with murder after assaulting a man they had been told had raped a woman. The informant gave evidence he did not have a strong opinion with respect to bail, the applicant having no prior convictions and having waited at the scene until the police arrived. The prosecutor did not vigorously oppose bail. Warren J said:

"That of itself would not be sufficient for me to form the view that exceptional circumstances were made out or otherwise. It is a matter of assessing all circumstances before I can determine whether or not exceptional circumstances can be made out."

Ultimately her Honour found exceptional circumstances based on a combination of matters, including the lack of real opposition to bail, the applicant's co-operation with authorities, employment, delay, family support and his lack of priors. Her Honour then assessed that the accused was not an unacceptable risk and released him on bail.

* In *DPP v Justin Noel Waters* [2004] VSC 303 the 20 year old applicant had been charged with murder arising out of the death of a person with whom he had had an altercation at a railway station. He had already been in custody for 4 months. The prosecution indicated formal opposition only to bail, the charge being one which carried the onus of exceptional circumstances. Habersberger J, noting the very close similarity with the case of *Whiteside*, granted bail taking into account all of the circumstances including:
* the circumstances of the offence and the fact that the actual charge was being reviewed by the DPP;
* the applicant's age, employment, lack of priors and ties to the community;
* the "lack of real opposition from the Crown"; and
* the "particularly important" factor of delay: "[T]he fact that a person who may subsequently be found innocent may be held in custody for a period of some 16 or more months pending trial is most undesirable and does not do our society credit".
* In *Azzopardi* [Supreme Court of Victoria, Gillard J, unreported, 23/07/2003] the applicant had been charged with murder of her 5 week old child. His Honour found exceptional circumstances were made out by the following 3 matters:
* given the strong indication of post-natal depression, the applicant might be acquitted of murder and found guilty of the alternative of infanticide;
* the applicant's fragile health was better managed in the community with her family than in protective custody in prison; and
* non-opposition by the Crown:

"[W]hilst the Crown has reminded the Court that it is a matter for the Court whether or not exceptional circumstances exist which justify the granting of bail, the Crown has indicated that it does not oppose this application, and that is also a factor that I take into account."

[Leanne Azzopardi subsequently pleaded guilty to the charge of infanticide and on 06/12/2004 Kellam J placed her on a community-based order for a period of 18 months: [2004] VSC 509.]

In *Re John Whiteside* [1999] VSC 413 Warren J cautioned against setting too high a hurdle for the applicant in determining exceptional circumstances. See also *R v Griffey* [2006] VSC 86 at [33] per King J. Nevertheless the cases illustrate that the 'exceptional circumstances' test is very stringent. In *Re Michael Barbaro* [2004] VSC 404 at [7], [17] & [21] Morris J thrice described it as a "high hurdle". The hurdle at its highest is to be found in the case of *YSA v DPP* [2002] VSCA 149 [Court of Appeal, unreported, 26/09/2002]. In that case, at the completion of a committal hearing, a magistrate had committed the accused for trial on charges of trafficking and conspiracy to traffick in a commercial quantity of heroin but had also found exceptional circumstances and granted bail. That decision was appealed by the DPP under s.18A of the **BA**. The magistrate had found that the following facts, when looked at together, amounted to exceptional circumstances-

"(a) the respondent has no prior convictions;

(b) the respondent has lived in Australia for 29 years and has a family including 3 children although he was not cohabiting with his wife at the date of his arrest;

(c) the respondent has a residence in Caulfield, albeit subject to a contract of sale and a [pending] requirement to vacate;

(d) the respondent had been in custody for 10 months and could be in custody for a further 10 months awaiting trial;

(e) the respondent's health is not good;

(f) the respondent can supply a surety of $300,000;

(g) one co-accused has already been released on bail;

(h) the respondent conducts a business in the Hallam area and had an offer of other employment; and

(i) the case against the respondent is not bound to succeed."

Holding that there were no exceptional circumstances, the Supreme Court allowed the DPP's appeal and revoked bail. His Honour said:

"Whilst undoubtedly the learned Magistrate was entitled to the view that the factors he identified were factors to be taken into account by him in favour of releasing the respondent on bail, can it be said that they constitute exceptional circumstances which can properly be described as unusual or out of the ordinary? In my opinion they cannot."

The respondent appealed. The Court of Appeal (Phillips, Chernov & Vincent JJA) dismissed the appeal, holding that "the judge was perfectly correct, with respect, in arriving at this conclusion".

The stringency of the 'exceptional circumstances' test is further illustrated by the case of *R v S* [2003] VSC 314, decided on 28/08/2003. The applicant was a suspended detective senior sergeant who had been a member of the police force for over 30 years. He had been charged with conspiracy to traffick a commercial quantity of pseudo ephedrine hydrochloride, conspiracy to traffick and trafficking of a drug of dependence, theft and making a threat to kill 3 persons, including the police officer who was in charge of the investigation which had led to the applicant's arrest. He was remanded in custody on 17/03/2003 having been refused bail by a magistrate on that date. An application to the Supreme Court for bail had been refused by Balmford J on 01/04/2003. A further application for bail was made before Williams J in August 2003 in which senior counsel for the applicant submitted that exceptional circumstances existed by reason of the following matters:

(i) the applicant's background;

(ii) his family situation - the sole surviving parent of 3 children aged 22, 19 & 13 - counsel referring to principles set out in *Wirth* (1976) 14 SASR 291 at 295-6 per White J; *Edwards* (1996) A Crim R 510 at 516 per Gleeson CJ and *Holland* [2002] VSCA 118 per Eames J;

(iii) the likely period of delay before trial - held not to be of the duration feared by the applicant;

(iv) the conditions under which he was presently incarcerated - in protective custody with 3 other protected prisoners with the applicant alone and the 3 others as a group having alternate rostered periods of 5½ hours per day during which they were free to move about the unit and use the common facilities;

(v) the risk to his safety whilst in custody;

(vi) the lack of strength in the prosecution case; and

(vii) the effect of incarceration on the applicant's health - symptoms of stress and demoralisation as well as mild to moderate depression of mood.

A surety of $190,000 was available and the applicant was prepared to submit to a form of house arrest for 23 hours each day. Nevertheless, bail was refused, Her Honour holding that neither alone nor in combination did the factors relied on constitute exceptional circumstances. Further Her Honour held that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of committing offences if released on bail, namely of killing the police officer in charge of the investigation, the proposed 23 hour home arrest being insufficient to render the risk acceptable rather than unacceptable. [On 15/03/2004, after a 6 week committal, Bolger M released the applicant on bail, having found exceptional circumstances constituted primarily by a delay of nearly 3 years between arrest and expected trial date and the conditions under which he was held on remand.]

There have, however, been a number of cases in which the hurdle for an accused required to show exceptional circumstances has not been set quite as high as Williams J did in *R v S*. For example, in *Andrea Mantase* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 21/09/2000] Vincent J granted bail to an applicant charged with attempted importation and importation of ecstasy and possession of a prohibited import in a commercial quantity. His Honour held that a combination of circumstances in that case amounted to exceptional circumstances, particularly-

* delay, including the fact that if the accused remained on remand the length of pre-sentence detention would approximate to the length of any prison sentence likely to be imposed,
* the accused's ties to Australia;
* the accused's employment and the fact that he had no priors; and
* the fact that his wife had recently suffered a miscarriage and needed his support.

In the course of his reasons in relation to delay, Vincent J said:

"…if our community, as it must do for good reasons on many occasions, is to detain individuals in custody prior to the determination of their guilt, then that period must be as short as reasonably practicable. Periods of 18 months or so of detention prior to the conduct of trials is by any form of reckoning extremely long. It is not to the point to say, in effect, that such periods represent the norm and, therefore, cannot constitute part of the matrix of exceptional circumstances. This, in effect, ultimately negates the very justification for detention prior to the determination of guilt. What I mean by this is that such detention must be directed to serving the ends of justice and not itself constituting a potential source of injustice."

His Honour went on to say:

"[D]etention in custody is not now, and never has been…anything other than a seriously unpleasant experience for those individuals who are subjected to it. It is one thing to await at liberty the conduct of a trial for a period of 18 months, that being stressful enough of itself. It is quite another for that period to pass whilst detained under a restrictive prison type regime. This aspect of detention seems to receive almost no attention…when consideration is given to applications of the present kind."

A very strong judicial statement in relation to delay was made by Crockett J in *George Pietrobon* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 13/01/1988]. The accused was charged with trafficking and conspiracy to traffick in a drug of dependence, his Honour categorising the evidence available to the Crown as "comprehensive", the case as "a strong one", the offences as "extremely serious [carrying] maximum penalties that are substantial". The accused had been on remand for 5 months and "unavoidable delay in the analysis of drugs and handwriting exhibits" was advanced as a reason for an adjournment for an unknown period (of at least another 4 months) prior to committal. Crockett J said:

"There must come a time in my view when the delay, part of the system and all as it may be, must be treated as inordinate so that notwithstanding the strength of the Crown case, the likelihood of conviction, the likelihood of the imposition of a severe penalty, a person must be treated as innocent until proved guilty can no longer be held in custody at the whim of the authorities and without any assurance as to when his committal proceeding or his trial may be expected to proceed…If it means, as it inevitably does, that because of such delays persons who are probably lawbreakers are released into the community further to break the law or to abscond or to engage in other types of lawless behaviour, then society will simply have to accept that risk because the price to be paid for its avoidance in holding persons in custody for inordinate periods of time without trial, is a price which I do not believe the community should be asked to pay."

And in *R v Medici* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 27/07/1993] where the accused had been in custody for 14 months and it was likely to be a further 10 months before his trial was complete, Ashley J found that the delay was so great that his continued detention in custody was not justified. In *Re Carter* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 31/03/1982] Marks J held that the holding in custody for 10 months of an accused charged with murder without a committal having been held "sufficiently transgresses the principles of justice" to be regarded as an exceptional circumstance. See also *R v Edwards* (1988) 35 A Crim R 465 and *R v Stephen Allan Cox* [2003] VSC 245, in the latter of which Redlich J pointed out at [18] that there have been a number of recent decisions of the West Australian Supreme Court dealing with legislation in almost identical terms in which similar observations have been made: see *Fawcett v R* [2002] WASC 285; *Outman v R* [2000] WASC 303 and *Pinkston v R* (2000) 119 A. Crim R. 462. In *Outman v R* at [28], Hasluck J after referring to *Alexopoulos* *v R* and *Pinkston v R* said:

“These cases suggest that delay should be measured not against the state of the court list in any particular jurisdiction, but having regard to objective criteria based on the concept that a humanitarian society recognising the presumption of innocence will find abhorrent the idea that people are kept in custody for such an undue time without trial.”

By contrast, in *DPP v Radev and Zayat* [1999] VSC 284, Beach J held that the fact that the accused had been in custody for 7 months and it was likely to be a further 7 or 8 months before their trial was complete did not establish any "unacceptable delay" on the part of the DPP. And in *DPP v Parker* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC25/94}, 19/08/1994], where the accused had been in custody for 32 months, Mandie J said that he was not "in full sympathy" with the statement by Crockett J in *Pietrobon's Case* "that society had to take the risk in some of these cases that persons who are lawbreakers should nevertheless be released into the community because the system was such that persons had to wait inordinate periods of time for trial", his Honour referring to "the mandate of Parliament in a case such as this [that the] Court is required to refuse bail unless the accused person shows cause why his detention in custody is not justified".

In 2020 the issue of “delay” received new impetus as a consequence of the disruption caused to the operations of the courts by the so-called COVID-19 pandemic and consequential State government health directions. In *Re Diab* [2020] VSC 196 the 29 year old applicant with a limited criminal history was charged with offences including attempted murder, discharging a firearm being reckless as to the safety of a police officer, common assault, theft of a motor vehicle and going equipped to steal. His Honour considered that the sentence to be imposed should the applicant be found guilty of the offences (even assuming he was acquitted of the attempted murder charge) was likely to be greater than the length of time he would spend on remand if bail was refused. Bail was refused on the basis that exceptional circumstances were not found and the applicant was an unacceptable risk in any event. On the issue of delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic Beach JA said at [38]:

“The way in which COVID-19 may be relevant in the establishment of exceptional circumstances has been discussed in a number of recent decisions of this Court: see *Re Broes* [2020] VSC 128, [35]-[42] (Lasry J); *Re McCann* [2020] VSC 138, [39], [40] (Lasry J); *Re Tong* [2020] VSC 141, [33], [34] (Tinney J); *Re El-Refei (No 2)* [2020] VSC 164, [17]-[27] (Incerti J); *Re Velluto* [2020] VSC 188, [47]-[48]; *Re Nicholls* [2020] VSC 189, [32]-[39] (‘*Nicholls*’) (Incerti J).. More generally, the way in which the current health crisis may be relevant in a bail application has also been discussed: see *Re JK* [2020] VSC 160, [19]-[26] (Hollingworth J); *Re JB* [2020] VSC 184, [40] (Kaye JA); *Nicholls* [2020] VSC 189, [32]-[39]. See also *Rakielbakhour* [2020] NSWSC 323, [15]-[19].. The following propositions have emerged:

* 1. Delay in trials due to COVID-19 may establish exceptional circumstances, particularly (but not limited to) where the delay is likely to lead to an accused spending more time on remand than the likely sentence.
  2. The existence of the current COVID-19 health crisis will not, however, give rise to exceptional circumstances in all cases. The crisis is simply one of the surrounding circumstances that a bail decision maker must take into account in considering an application for bail.
  3. The relevance of the COVID-19 crisis is that it may make time in custody very difficult and/or significantly more difficult than usual. Moreover, to the extent that correctional facilities are not permitting visitors, there may be greater isolation for those on remand. Additionally, the extent to which the crisis may impede education and/or rehabilitation opportunities is a matter capable of being relevant and, to that extent, would need to be taken into account.
  4. In any individual bail application, in the absence of agreement between the parties, much will depend upon the evidence of the effect of the crisis so far as it concerns the circumstances of the applicant for bail.”

In the case of *Memery* [2000] VSC 495 the applicant had been charged with murder, albeit in circumstances where a defence of self-defence was open. Stating at [31] that “it has been recognised by this court that a weak Crown case may constitute exceptional circumstances", Gillard J held that if there was sufficient evidence to satisfy the court that there were good prospects that a defence of self-defence would be upheld, with the result of an acquittal or, at worst, a verdict of manslaughter, then the applicant would be *prima facie* entitled to bail. In *Rick Anthony Waters* [2005] VSC 443 Hollingworth J applied this dictum in granting bail to an applicant charged with murdering his father in circumstances where a defence of provocation was “strongly open”. In *R v Serrano* [2005] VSC 500 Harper J referred with approval to this dictum but held that the Crown case was not weak and refused bail.

In *IMO an Application for Bail by Amer Haddara* [2006] VSC 8 at [20]-[23], Osborn J – although not finding present exceptional circumstances for an applicant charged with terrorism offences – issued a warning in relation to the conditions in which accused persons were held:

“As a general rule an accused person who enjoys the presumption of innocence but is held in custody pending trial should be kept in conditions which are as humane as are reasonably practicable…In the present case the applicant is held in seriously confined conditions…In my view the conditions in which the applicant is confined are such that if such confinement continued for a protracted period pending trial it might be regarded as constituting exceptional circumstances. It cannot be said, however, that at present the conditions under which Mr Haddara is being held constitute exceptional circumstances.”

In *DPP (Cth) v Pasquale Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717; [2009] VSCA 26 the accused had been charged with very serious offences relating to drug importation and trafficking. A magistrate initially refused his application for bail but three months later granted bail subject to very restrictive conditions. On appeal by the Commonwealth DPP, Forrest J ordered that bail be revoked. An appeal by the accused pursuant to s.17(2) of the *Supreme Court Act 1986* was dismissed. The Court of Appeal (Maxwell P, Vincent & Kellam JJA) agreed. In the appeal the DPP had effectively conceded that the exceptional circumstances threshold had been satisfied on the basis that the accused’s trial would not begin until more than two years after he was charged. The delay was attributed to the complexity of the circumstances underlying the charges and to the scale of the evidence – in particular transcripts of telephone intercepts – underpinning the Crown case. At [6] the Court of Appeal said:

“As the magistrate recognised, however, the establishment of exceptional circumstances does not create an entitlement to bail. Even if the applicant for bail satisfies the court that exceptional circumstances exist which justify bail, bail must nevertheless be refused if the prosecution establishes unacceptable risk. See *Beljajev v DPP* (1998) 101 A Crim R 362; *Re Waters* [2005] VSC 443 (unreported, Hollingworth J, 26 October 2005) at [5].”

It was common ground that the issue raised by the Director’s appeal from the magistrate was whether it was reasonably open to conclude that the accused did not represent an unacceptable risk of flight were he to be granted bail. The Court of Appeal agreed with Forrest J that it was not reasonably open.

In *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 the applicant was a 13 year old boy. T Forrest J said at [14]:

“Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. **Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1).** In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.”

In *Re HAH* [2019] VSC 776 the applicant was a 13 year old boy who had an IQ of 47, diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and had been in the care of DHHS on a care by Secretary order since the age of 8. He was charged with theft of a phone “in a most infantile way” at a time when he was already on bail in relation to two outstanding matters and charged on summons in respect of two others. The majority of these matters involved incidents relating to his conduct at the therapeutic residential unit where he resided. He accordingly fell into the “exceptional circumstances” category. In granting bail Lasry J said at [26]:

“As has been stated in previous decisions of this Court, the influence of s 3B is such that the assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ is different in the case of a child than it is for an adult. This means that a child may meet the requisite threshold through a combination of circumstances, including the considerations set out in s 3B, whereas an adult with the same combination of circumstances may fall short: See *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 [14]. See also *Application for Bail by LT* [2019] VSC 143 [37]; *Re CT* [65].”

In *Re MI* [2019] VSC 347 the 28 year old applicant was charged with importing and attempting to possess commercial quantities of a border controlled drug, in total 50 kilograms of cocaine. In determining that he had not shown exceptional circumstances pursuant to ss. ss 4A(1), 4A(1A) & 4AA of the **BA**, Macaulay J – after referring to dicta of Beale J in *Re Reker* [2019] VSC 81 at [39], Kaye J in *DPP v Muhaidat* [2004] VSC 17 at [13]-[14], Beach JA in *Re Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 at [45], Champion J in *Re CT* [2018] VSC 559 at [65], Priest JA in *Re Gloury-Hyde* [2018] VSC 393 at [30] & [35] and Lasry J in *Armstrong v R* [2013] VSC 111 at [31]– held at [52]-[53]:

“In my judgment, taken in combination, the circumstances relied upon fall short of amounting to exceptional circumstances. Sadly, circumstances of family and personal hardship, disruption of business, financial hardship, and the experience of anxiety and depression at being in custody (and the consequences it brings) are not, in combination, circumstances that are so out of the ordinary for those placed in custody, especially for the first time. Bail must therefore be refused.”

In *Re Sisper* [2019] VSC 362 the 42 year applicant who had no prior convictions and was in practice as a chiropractor was charged with importing a commercial quantity of a border controlled drug, attempting to possess a commercial quantity of a border controlled drug, trafficking a drug of dependence, possessing a drug of dependence, and dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime. The drug was cocaine. Beach JA refused bail, both because the applicant had not shown exceptional circumstances and because he was an unacceptable risk: see [51]. In relation to exceptional circumstances, Beach JA said at [43]:

“Recently, in *Re Reker* [2019] VSC 81 at [39], Beale J, citing Kaye J in *DPP v Muhaidat* [2004] VSC 17 at [13]-[14], referred to the meaning of exceptional circumstances in the following terms:

‘Effectively, the applicant has to establish circumstances right out of the ordinary. They have to be exceptional to the ordinary circumstances which would otherwise entitle the applicant to bail. Ordinary circumstances consist of circumstances such as hardship to the accused or to his family, disruption of his work and similar matters.’”

In *Re Granata* [2020] VSC 879 the applicant was charged contravening a control order pursuant to s.104.27 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth)*,* the maximum penalty for which is 5 years’ imprisonment. In the course of finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail, T Forrest JA said at [22]-[25]:

“Over the years, in State and federal contexts, courts have used, inter alia, adjectives such as, ‘uncommon’, ‘unusual’, ‘atypical’, ‘abnormal’ and ‘extraordinary’ [*R v Naizmand* [2016] NSWSC 836, [8] (Harrison J)] and phrases such as, ‘out of the ordinary’ [*Hammoud* [2006] VSC 516, [3] (Bongiorno J)].

I do not propose to come up with an adjective of my own, and I doubt that the adjectives that I have set out above are interchangeable. ‘Uncommon’ circumstances would, in my view, set the bar lower than Parliament intended, and ‘extraordinary’ circumstances would set the bar higher than Parliament intended.

‘Exceptional’ is a normal English word in common use and with its own well-understood meaning. I shall apply it in that sense. I accept that it is a flexible concept and that a combination of factors may constitute exceptional circumstances where, individually, they may not reach that level. I was taken to the New South Wales case of *R v Naizmand* as a very rare example of a bail application linked to the control order offence. With respect, I disagree with that part of Harrison J’s analysis of the phrase ‘exceptional circumstances’ in that case, in which his Honour observed at [8]: ‘In the nature of things, the reference to circumstances being exceptional is literally a reference to the regularity with which they might be expected to occur, not necessarily a reference to the nature or quality of the circumstances in question.’

Applying this logical process, an unanticipated event with widespread catastrophic consequences such as, for instance, the deferral of all court hearings for, say, five years, would not, in itself, be exceptional because it would apply to all prisoners on remand. **In my view, the term ‘exceptional’ is used in a broader sense than to connote mere arithmetic. If, for example, an event is rare, it could be exceptional. But so could it be if it were ‘unexpected’ or ‘outstanding’ or ‘bizarre’ or, dare I say it, ‘exceptional’. My point is that, where Parliament has left a phrase undefined and where the liberty of its subjects are concerned, courts ought to be cautious in construing that phrase too narrowly.**” [emphasis added]

In *Re Roberts* [2020] VSC 793 the applicant had been convicted of murder of two police officers. There was an irregularity in the applicant’s trial on-disclosure of material evidence to defence, giving rise to a serious departure from proper process affecting fundamental fairness of trial. The applicant’s conviction had been quashed and a new trial ordered. The applicant had been in custody for more than 20 years before the order quashing the convictions was made. In refusing bail Beach JA held that there was a strong Crown case and the existence of exceptional circumstances was not established. At [20] his Honour said:

“To establish that the circumstances of the applicant’s case are, in a general sense, ‘exceptional’ is not sufficient, there must be exceptional circumstances that justify the grant of bail.”

A subsequent appeal by Mr Roberts against a refusal of his application for bail was refused. In *Roberts v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 28 Maxwell P, Niall & Emerton JJA, after some analysis of the cases, discussed a number of factors commonly relied upon to amount to the threshold of exceptional circumstances and concluded at [47]-[48]:

“What appears to underpin the judicial recognition of these different types of circumstances as justifying a grant of bail is that they are seen to render continued pre-trial detention unjust, even in relation to very serious offending…

It is the perceived need to avert or mitigate such injustice which justifies the grant of bail — provided always that the circumstances can properly be characterised as exceptional.”

See also *DPP v Roberts (Ruling No 2)* [2021] VSC 559 at [45]-[81].

In *Re KE* [2021] VSC 175 the 16 year old applicant was charged with carjacking, aggravated burglary, attempted aggravated burglary, theft of motor vehicle and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He was also on bail in respect of three sets of other charges. Kaye JA held at [50]:

“In essence, in order to fulfil that requirement, the circumstances relied on by the applicant must be such as to take the case out of the ordinary. That is, the circumstances must be exceptional to the ordinary circumstances which would otherwise entitle an applicant to bail. It is accepted that exceptional circumstances may be established by a combination of circumstances which, individually, might not be considered exceptional: *DPP v Muhaidat* [[2004] VSC 17,](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2004/17.html) [13] (Kaye J); *Re Brown* [[2019] VSC 751,](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2019/751.html) [65]–[66] (Lasry J); *Re Tong* [[2020] VSC 141,](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2020/141.html) [18] (Tinney J).”

Although acknowledging at [51] that “the age of the applicant is a significant factor to be taken into account” in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated [*Re JO* [[2018] VSC 438,](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2018/438.html) [14]; *Re JF* [2020] VSC 250, [32] (Tinney J); *Re AM* [[2020] VSC 569,](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2020/569.html) [36] (Tinney J); *Re GG* [2021] VSC 12, [47] (Incerti J)], Kaye JA refused bail, holding that exceptional circumstances had not b been made out and that the applicant was an unacceptable risk in any event.

In *Re MJ* [2021] VSC 592 the 35 year old applicant was charged almost 2 years later with murder dating from 2019. The case against the applicant relied on CCTV footage, forensic evidence and statements made to police by an associate of the applicant, implicating the applicant in the murder by relating admissions the applicant is alleged to have made about his involvement. At [19] Lasry J said:

“The phrase ‘exceptional circumstances’ is not defined in the Act. It has, however, been the subject of voluminous judicial commentary over the years that has been broadly consistent, though some disagreements still lurk in the detail.”

The applicant’s father had offered a surety of $400,000 and the applicant was willing to submit to electronic monitoring. He also had a limited criminal history and family support. In refusing bail Lasry J emphasised the seriousness of the alleged offending and concluded at [71]:

“Taking into account all the judicial explanations of the meaning of “exceptional circumstances”, I am not persuaded that in this case that they have been established. Taking the approach of the Court of Appeal in *Roberts*, I am not persuaded that the continued remand of the applicant will be productive of a future injustice. Although the applicant’s continued incarceration carries with it several difficulties which I do not underestimate, I do not understand that it is argued on behalf of the applicant that there will be, for example, unusual future hardship and mental distress over and above that.”

In *Re Tiba (No 2)* [2021] VSC 716 the 22 year old applicant (21 at time of alleged offending) was charged with murder, attempted armed robbery and possessing a handgun without a licence. Bail had previously been refused by Coghlan JA on the ground that exceptional circumstances had not been made out: see *Re Tiba* [2021] VSC 429. At [11] Lasry J found new facts and circumstances based on the undermining of identification evidence against the applicant at the recent s.198B CPA hearings and evidence concerning the applicant’s parents’ recent health issues. At [13]-[15] his Honour said:

[13] “The Act does not define what is meant by ‘exceptional circumstances’. I have previously summarised when circumstances may be taken to have reached the threshold of ‘exceptional’ with reference to earlier judicial commentary: *Re Brown* [2019] VSC 751 [65]:

* + The circumstances relied upon must be such as to take the case out of the normal so as to justify the admission of the applicant to bail.
  + Whilst the threshold of exceptional circumstances is high, it is not an impossible standard to reach.
  + Furthermore, exceptional circumstances may be established by a combination of circumstances which may, by themselves, not be considered exceptional.

[14] More recently, the Court of Appeal (Maxwell P, Niall and Emerton JA) in *Roberts v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 28 expanded on the concept at [9]-[10]:

[9] A review of bail decisions in ‘exceptional circumstances’ cases reveals certain types of circumstances which recur as justifications for bail in such cases: unreasonable delay before trial; unacceptable adverse impacts of continued pre-trial incarceration (whether on the accused person or on his/her dependants); and the likelihood that time spent on remand will exceed any term of imprisonment which would be imposed in the event of conviction. What these different kinds of circumstances appear to have in common is that they are capable of rendering continued pre-trial incarceration unjust, notwithstanding the statutory prohibition on bail which otherwise applies.

[10] The informing principle seems to be clear: if continued incarceration before trial would be productive of injustice, then a grant of bail may be justified (subject always to the separate question of ‘unacceptable risk’). The bail decision maker is thus looking to the future, considering the likely consequences of the continued incarceration of the applicant for bail. Past events may be relevant to that consideration, as in the cases concerning pre-trial delay, but what justifies bail is the need to prevent or mitigate *future* injustice.

[15] In *Re MJ* [2021] VSC 592, I endeavoured to further elaborate on the principle by saying at [22]-[23]:

[22] Of course, the need for mitigation of future injustice will often arise from past events but in any event there are degrees of injustice. For example, there is some injustice in any delay of criminal litigation but in the absence of unlimited resources that is an inevitable aspect of the criminal justice system. As the level of delay increases, so the injustice that flows from it magnifies. A significant delay of the order of three years may be strongly argued to be, of itself, an exceptional circumstance. As Incerti J said in *Re Shea*:

In my view, despite the gravity of the alleged offending and sentence likely to be imposed if the applicant were convicted, it is strongly arguable that a two and a half year delay, let alone three year delay, is one that, in and of itself, amounts to exceptional circumstances justifying bail. As Lasry J said in *Re Jiang*, ‘a period of pre-trial custody of three years will demonstrate exceptional circumstances in almost every case’.

[23] If a significant delay in a given case is coupled with uncertainty (as is now happening because of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the case backlog in the County Court) so that the remand of a prisoner takes on the appearance of an indefinite and unjust pre-trial detention, it is not difficult to conclude, possibly in combination with other factors, that such circumstances are exceptional. *However it will always be the particular circumstances of the given case that are important, and there are no generalised rules as to what are and what are not exceptional circumstances. All one can do is endeavour to understand and apply the preceding authorities and apply* [*s 3AAA*](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ba197741/s3aaa.html) *of the Act* (emphasis added)*.*

At [45]-[51] his Honour found exceptional circumstances based on matters including parity with coaccused, uncertainty in the prosecution case, the applicant’s youth and lack of relevant prior convictions, the COVID-19 pandemic and delay [‘The backlog of pending cases awaiting trial has grown to alarming proportions’]. Unacceptable risk was not demonstrated. Bail was granted with conditions.

### **9.4.1.1 SOME CASES IN WHICH EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WERE FOUND AND BAIL WAS GRANTED**

*George Gustav Hofer*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Smith J, unreported, 09/12/1991]

The accused was charged with offences arising from importation of 500kg of cannabis with a street value of $15 million and was arrested with 10kg of cannabis in his car. The offences were committed while he was on bail for theft, trafficking and possession & use of false documents. The accused was a 51 year old married man with 2 adult daughters and a grandchild. His Honour held that exceptional circumstances did exist arising from a combination of:

(i) prior and likely future delay (expected to be 17 months);

(ii) health of accused and need for treatment for his back (report from orthopaedic surgeon tendered);

(iii) the accused's wife was under particular and unusual stress.

*Arthur Hastings Brown*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Hampel J, unreported, 23/04/1987]

Accused was charged with murder involving explosives. His Honour held that the following factors in combination amounted to exceptional circumstances:

* antecedents & work record;
* family situation and financial needs;
* probable delay before trial;
* likelihood of appearing on bail;
* likelihood of not committing further offences whilst on bail;
* likelihood of not interfering with witnesses;
* need for preparation of defence; and
* circumstantial nature of the case against the accused.

*Luscombe*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Harper J, unreported, 22/06/1993]

His Honour found exceptional circumstances constituted by the "appalling conditions" of the custodial facilities and released the accused on bail notwithstanding a strong Crown case and grave concern in relation to the accused attempting to contact witnesses or committing offences whilst on bail: "[O]therwise the [accused] might continue to be held for an indefinite period in accommodation which is not suited to the long-term incarceration of persons awaiting trial".

*John Denis Moloney*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Vincent J, unreported, 31/10/1990]

Accused was charged with murder. His Honour identified a number of factors relevant to a determination of whether exceptional circumstances existed and held that although none of the factors would of themselves constitute exceptional circumstances, they did so when taken in conjunction in this case:

* strength of prosecution case;
* period during which accused likely to remain in custody prior to committal proceedings or trial;
* prior criminal history (relevant for a variety of purposes, including whether or not the accused:
* has a propensity to violent crime or repeated crime;
* has failed to comply with previous grants of bail;
* has a propensity to engage in irresponsible or anti-social behaviour generally; or
* is likely to interfere with witnesses);
* stable residence; and
* stable income.

*Susan Elizabeth Freeman*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coldrey J, unreported, 07/03/1997]

Accused was charged with murder of her husband. The evidence was equivocal, there being some suggestion that he had committed suicide. His Honour found exceptional circumstances based on a combination of the following factors, the first of which he categorized as the most important factor:

* the equivocal nature of the evidence supporting the prosecution case;
* the exemplary background of the accused;
* the difficulty of getting appropriate psychiatric treatment from the treating psychiatrist while the accused was in custody;
* the effect of her incarceration on the accused's business;
* delay; and
* the fact that there was no risk of failing to appear.

*Alexopoulos*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Hampel J, {MC15/98}, 23/02/1998]

Accused was charged with importation of 3kg of heroin. The case against him was circumstantial based on false denials. Accused relied on a combination of factors to show "exceptional circumstances", including-

* defacto's drug and alcohol problem which incapacitates her in relation to the care of their 7 year old child;
* elderly parents in poor health who relied on accused to help run their business.

However the primary factor on which the accused relied was delay. Hampel J said:

"In my opinion where exceptional circumstances which substantially depend on delay are raised, they cannot be measured simply by what is the normal or usual delay at any particular period of time. Judges of this court have, over the years, said that long delays are simply not acceptable, quite apart from what may be normal or usual. There was a time when senior judges in this court thought that anything over a year, as a rule of thumb, would be treated as being exceptional or inordinate. I think there must be some objective criteria which does not depend purely on what the position is at the particular time because of delays in the system or lack of resources. It must be objective criteria based on the concept that we are a humanitarian society which respects the presumption of innocence and finds abhorrent the idea that people are kept in custody for undue time without trial. The Bail Act, I think, must be interpreted in that context and not simply by what happens to be the unhappy norm at this time."

Based on these factors, his Honour granted bail, noting that the evidence against the accused was not so "overwhelming" as to make him "a flight risk".

*R v Nadim Ahmad*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Teague J]

[2003] VSC 209

The 64 year old accused was charged with possession of and trafficking in a commercial quantity of ecstasy. Held: Exceptional circumstances found comprising "delay and health and life expectancy problems" of the accused.

*R v Stephen Allan Cox*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Redlich J]

[2003] VSC 245

A former police detective sergeant was charged with trafficking in and conspiracy to traffick in a commercial quantity of heroin. His Honour held that the following factors in combination amounted to exceptional circumstances, although he noted at [23] that factors 6 & 7 considered in isolation would not have been sufficient to warrant the granting of bail:

1. the Crown case was not particularly strong;
2. the applicant was previously of good character;
3. one of the co-accused had been granted bail and other serving members charged with serious offences had also been granted bail;
4. protective custody is a more onerous form of incarceration: see *R v ZMN* [2002] 4 VR 537 at [13] & [24];
5. there was an anticipated delay of uncertain duration, possibly exceeding 18 months before trial;
6. applicant was a married man with 3 children aged 10, 9½ & 6 and prospect of employment in a real estate agency; his close ties to the jurisdiction meant that he was not a risk of absconding;
7. the applicant's psychiatric condition - a depressive condition - had been exacerbated by the stress arising from the risks associated with a police officer being on remand within the prison system and the gloomy prognostications of the length of time for which he might remain there before his trial.

The Crown had opposed bail for the additional reason that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses if released on bail. His Honour held at [3] that no persuasive evidentiary basis had been provided for this assertion and released the applicant on bail.

*DPP v Bernath*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Williams J]

[2003] VSC 304

Accused was charged with possession and trafficking of a commercial quantity of amphetamine and conspiracy to traffick a commercial quantity. He had a prior conviction for drug trafficking in 1995 for which he had received 4 years' imprisonment. He had not breached parole and had never breached bail. A magistrate had found exceptional circumstances based upon an anticipated delay of uncertain duration before trial. After referring to *DPP v Tong* [2000] VSC 451, *Medici* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Ashley J, unreported, 27/09/1993], *R v Alexopoulos* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Hampel J, unreported, 23/02/1998], *R v Kantzidis* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Smith J, unreported, 09/08/1996], *R v Mantase* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Vincent J, unreported, 21/09/2000], *R v Cox* [2003] VSC 245 per Redlich J, *Mokbel v DPP* [2002] VSC 127 per Kellam J and *YSA v DPP* [2002] VSCA 149, Williams J held at [23] that "the learned Magistrate did not err in his finding at an early stage that exceptional circumstances justifying bail existed by reason of the uncertain period of anticipated delay of at least 2 years at the time of the application". Further, Her Honour found at [29] & [32] that there was not an unacceptable risk that the applicant would fail to appear or would re-offend while on bail.

*Bilal Ozdemir*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Lush J, unreported, 28/08/1970]

The accused was charged with murder. The judge viewed the Crown case as very weak. The accused was unable to communicate effectively in English. His Honour found that the accused had discharged the onus of proving exceptional circumstances: "For this man to be kept in gaol for 6 months until the inquest in the situation in which he can scarcely communicate with any other human being is specially oppressive".

*R v Hai Minh Nguyen*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Warren CJ]

[2003] VSC 508

The 22 year old applicant was charged with 9 other co-accused with trafficking a commercial quantity of heroin, possession of heroin and possession of property being the proceeds of crime. The ring-leader of the group was said to be supplying multiple 350 gram blocks of heroin for between $105,000 & $115,000 each throughout suburban Melbourne. The applicant was said to be obtaining heroin from others higher up the chain and driving the supplier to numerous locations to meet customers and sell heroin to them. The applicant was a heroin user and had prior convictions for trafficking heroin. The Chief Justice found that exceptional circumstances were made out by:

* the preparedness of the applicant, as a condition of bail, to submit to the Bail Advocacy Program operating out of the Melbourne Magistrates' Court which Her Honour:
* categorized at [18] as appearing "in many respects to be quite onerous so far as a participant is concerned"; and
* considered at [19] "would be of assistance to the applicant and would facilitate his compliance with any condition that might be attached to bail";
* the undesirability of retaining a person of the applicant's age in custody for a period that could prove to be as long as two years before trial and which might deprive the applicant of opportunities for rehabilitation and personal betterment that could ultimately be put before a court on sentence if appropriate and necessary (at [24]);
* the stabilising effect of his girl-friend on the applicant's previous drug addiction (at [13]); and
* the provision of a surety of $50,000 (at [26]).

Of these matters the Chief Justice described compliance with and participation in the Bail Advocacy Program at [24] as "pivotal".

*Nicola Docmanov*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Hampel J, unreported, 13/05/1998]

The applicant, a Canadian citizen, was charged with importing a commercial quantity of cocaine. His Honour held that although it would be unusual to grant bail to a foreign national in an 'exceptional circumstances' case, the following factors in combination warranted the applicant's release on bail on very strict conditions:

* the circumstantial nature of the case against the accused;
* significant delay before trial (expected to be 14-16 months);
* the applicant was 24 years old and had a good work history and family background;
* the applicant's father was prepared to come to Australia and provide a $100,000 surety; and
* the applicant had a sister-in-law in Victoria prepared to provide accommodation and a surety.

*MacDonald v DPP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Morris J]

[2004] VSC 431

The applicant was charged with murdering her husband and had made admissions to having shot him. The Crown conceded that if the Court was satisfied that exceptional circumstances existed, the applicant was not an unacceptable risk on any of the grounds set out in s.4(2)(d) of the **BA**. Morris J found exceptional circumstances based on a combination of the following factors:

* the applicant was an acceptable risk in relation to the matters in s.4(2)(d) of the **BA**;
* the Crown did not actively oppose bail;
* the family of both the applicant and the deceased supported the granting of bail;
* the applicant had no priors and was said to have a caring, gentle and co-operative nature;
* the applicant had 5 children aged between 9 & 2½ who were presently in the care of her parents, both in their late 60s and with health problems;
* delay, particularly relevant in relation to the 2½ year old child;
* evidence that increasingly during the later part of the marriage the deceased acted in a controlling way towards the applicant and from time to time engaged in aggressive or even violent conduct in relation to the children and the applicant.

*DPP (Vic) v Cozzi*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coldrey J]

(2005) 12 VR 211

[2005] VSC 195

The 55 year old respondent was charged with cultivating a commercial quantity of cannabis, cultivating a large commercial quantity of cannabis, possessing cannabis and trafficking a large commercial quantity of cannabis. A magistrate “who has great practical experience of the system”, being satisfied there were exceptional circumstances, granted him bail on certain conditions. The DPP appealed. The appeal was dismissed, Coldrey J holding that the following factors in combination were capable of constituting exceptional circumstances:

* the prospective delay;
* the respondent’s stable residence;
* his ties to the jurisdiction;
* his family support;
* his bail history; and
* his health (type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, ferritin, gastritis, a fatty liver and a tyroid nodule).

*IMO an Application for Bail by Cardona*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Kellam J]

[2005] VSC 186

The 62 year old applicant was charged, *inter alia*, with conspiracy to traffick in a commercial quantity of psuedoephidrine. He had been granted bail by a magistrate some days after his arrest, that magistrate being satisfied that there were exceptional circumstances. The conditions were subsequently relaxed by another magistrate. However, a third magistrate, after conducting the committal refused bail on the basis that the applicant had not shown exceptional circumstances. Kellam J granted bail, holding that the following factors in combination did demonstrate exceptional circumstances:

* the applicant’s age;
* his stable residence and ties to the jurisdiction;
* the likely delay of not less than 12 months prior to trial;
* his bail history evidenced by compliance for 18 months with the previous bail conditions, especially the condition involving ongoing psychological treatment; and
* his health (likelihood of fundoplication surgery in the near future).

*R v Griffey*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, King J]

[2006] VSC 86

The applicant charged with the murder of her husband from whom she had been amicably separated for some years. The applicant and the deceased continued to run the family business and to reside in the family home together for some of the week. The Crown case was purely circumstantial. The Crown relied on motive and opportunity, the motive being a life insurance policy which would rescue the business of the applicant and the deceased from its problems, the opportunity being the fact that the applicant was the last person to see the deceased alive. King J granted bail, holding that the following factors in totality did demonstrate exceptional circumstances:

* the strength of the Crown case which her Honour categorized at [22] as “barely arguable”;
* delay even though no “extraordinary delay” was expected [decision of Redlich J in *Stephen Allan Cox* [2003] VSC 245 referred to with approval]; and
* the support offered to the applicant by her three children and the impact on them.

*Re Harold Taylor*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2007] VSC 41

The applicant was charged with the murder of his three month old baby daughter one week before. Bongiorno J granted bail, holding that the following factors in combination constituted exceptional circumstances:

* the Crown case could not be said to be strong, particularly with respect to the mental element of murder; the current evidence before the Court was that the pathologist could not exclude the possibility that the injuries from which the child died were caused by accident;
* incarceration under protection because the applicant was charged with the murder of a small child was likely to be for a period of more than 12 months and to be more of a hardship than if the applicant was not under protection; and
* the applicant’s prior history, employment, apparent stability of residence and capacity to provide a significant surety had eliminated any fears of failing to appear.

*IMO bail applications by Leanne Elizbaeth Walker & Jamiee Lee Hurle*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Osborn J]

[2008] VSC 493 & 494

The applicants were charged with drug trafficking and associated offences. There was a significant delay – not attributable to the applicants - in the finalization of evidence, resulting in there being no probability of the cases being tried within two years of the date of arrest. Leanne Walker is the mother of Jamiee Lee Hurle and is also the mother of young children. Jamiee Hurle is the mother of infant children. The Crown did not oppose a finding that exceptional circumstances existed which justified the granting of bail. In respect of each applicant, Osborn J said at [6]-[7]:

“In my view the probable delay which is, from the point of this Court as a supervisory court, totally unacceptable, does constitute exceptional circumstances when it is coupled with a series of other factors. First, the applicant has young/infant children, and the proposed delay is in my view doubly unacceptable in these circumstances. It is apparent that imprisonment will cause hardship not only to the applicant who is herself at this stage to be presumed innocent, but also to her children as they progress through highly significant years in terms of their own personal development. These factors also fall to be evaluated in a context where an appropriate place of residence for the applicant is available, and it is proposed that she will undertake drug counselling and, if appropriate, drug rehabilitation treatment during the course of bail. A surety is also available for the applicant.”

*Angelo Venditti v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2008] VSC 604

The applicant was charged with murder. There was what Bongiorno J described as an “exposed weakness in the Crown case”. In granting bail, his Honour said at [9]:

“That a combination of factors can amount to exceptional circumstances for the purposes of s 13(2)(b) is well accepted. There is no reason to exclude the weakness of the Crown case as being a contributor to that combination. Indeed, if…the Crown case could not succeed on the material before the court, this would, of itself, constitute an exceptional circumstance.”

His Honour found exceptional circumstances comprised of the weakness in the Crown case, the probable delay before trial and the extreme conditions of the applicant’s incarceration. Further, that the risks of flight, of interfering with witnesses and of committing offences whilst on bail can be accommodated by the imposition of strict bail conditions and adequate sureties.

*DPP v Leon Borthwick*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Cummins J]

[2009] VSC 102

The 19 year old applicant was charged with murder, the offence alleged to have been constituted by the applicant deliberately driving at the deceased using his car as a lethal weapon. The applicant said that the collision with the deceased was accidental. Although his Honour concluded that the prosecution case was a substantial one – “certainly not weak” – he found exceptional circumstances constituted by a combination of factors:

* the age of the applicant;
* the applicant’s lack of prior convictions;
* the fact that if not granted bail the applicant would be held in an adult prison;
* the delay until committal and if committed before trial.

His Honour also found that any risk of interference by the accused with witnesses could be met by imposing strict conditions on bail.

*Nikola Andreevski v R; Jovan Ogrizovic v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coghlan J]

[2009] VSC 115

The applicants, respectively aged 20 & 18, were charged with murder, attempted murder and affray. In the course of finding that exceptional circumstances existed his Honour said at [7]-[10]:

* I do not regard the Crown cases as weak but it was certainly less strong in the case of Andreevski.
* “[I]t was unusual to find young men involved in this sort of activity who have no prior convictions and I regard that feature of the case as very important.”
* The parents called impressed me with the support they will give their sons. In addition Andreevski’s family have been able to find him work.
* “[T]he very earliest a trial would proceed is July 2010…I suspect that 18 months to 24 months before trial is more realistic. In these circumstances I am faced with the probability of young first offenders spending two years or more in an adult prison before trial. That would as a matter of justice be undesirable, and undesirable in community terms.”

His Honour concluded at [11] that “in all, the features of the case, including the limited role played by each of these applicants, their age, their lack of prior convictions and delay, amount to exceptional circumstances.” Such risk as exists could, in his Honour’s view, “be satisfactorily ameliorated by the imposition of suitable conditions”.

*Mrnjaus & Ors v R; Garcia & Anor v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coghlan J]

[2009] VSC 147 & 149

The applicants were charged with murder and attempted murder. Their limited role in the incident, lack of or limited prior convictions, youth, family support and delay amounted to exceptional circumstances. All applicants were granted bail.

For a further case in which exceptional circumstances were found within s.15AA(1) *Anti-Terrorism Act 2004* (Cth) and bail granted by the Chief Magistrate was confirmed notwithstanding two DPP applications for revocation, see *DPP (Cth) v Thomas* [2005] VSC 85 per Teague Jand [2005] VSC 435R [currently restricted] per Cummins J at [22]. In the former case Teague J rejected the DPP submission that the Chief Magistrate had accorded undue weight to a psychiatrist’s report, holding at [31]:

“On a bail application, a report from a psychiatrist stating that the circumstances of incarceration are having substantial adverse consequences on the mental health of the remandee could never be taken lightly. It obviously has the potential to be a significant contribution to a finding of exceptional circumstances.”

*Nathan Scott*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, T Forrest J]

[2011] VSC 674

The applicant was charged with murder in circumstances where it is alleged that he had deliberately run down the deceased. He had been in custody for 8 months and had turned 19 two days before being taken into custody. He was refused bail by Kaye J after being on remand for 1½ months on the basis that he had failed to demonstrate exceptional circumstances and was an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses. T Forrest J found that the applicant was no longer an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses or committing further offences. His Honour concluded that the applicant had demonstrated exceptional circumstances based on the following four factors:

* The applicant was extremely young. He has been imprisoned in adult gaol for the last 8 months and was recently transferred to the maximum security Barwon Prison for a time for purely logistical reasons. “Barwon Prison is no place for a 19 year old on remand and with only Children’s Court prior convictions.”
* The applicant has accommodation available with the H family. His Honour was impressed with the candour of Mrs H and her determination to assist the applicant.
* The prosecution case is “not overwhelming by any means” on the charge of murder.
* Delay of 15-18 months before trial by itself is not an inordinate delay and alone it would not constitute exceptional circumstances but it should be given modest weight in combination with other factors.

*Hang Cao*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Hollingworth J]

[2015] VSC 198

The accused was charged with cultivating a commercial quantity of cannabis. Risk of flight and reoffending were not unacceptable. Delay was also a factor considered. But the central issue was that the applicant’s 8 year old child had experienced learning difficulties and was seeing a psychologist while the parents were in custody. His psychological wellbeing would likely be impacted by long separation from his parents. In holding that exceptional circumstances had been established and granting bail her Honour said at [47]:

“Sentencing and bail considerations are not identical. However, as a matter of principle, the fact that a young child may otherwise be left without parental care for a substantial period of time may constitute exceptional circumstances for the purpose of a bail application.”

*Hall v Pangemanan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2018] VSC 533

The 37 year old applicant was charged with being drunk in a public place and breaching a curfew condition of bail. These offences were allegedly committed while being on bail for identical offences. The applicant suffered from Smith-Magenis syndrome, a genetic developmental disorder caused by a chromosomal abnormality. He had been diagnosed with a mild to moderate intellectual disability and lived in supported accommodation. He had previously been found to be unfit to plead, which state is likely to be permanent. Even if he was fit to plead, he would not be imprisoned if found guilty. He had an alcohol abuse problem and had a high risk of being drunk in a public place if released on bail. However, in the circumstances this was not an unacceptable risk. He was incapable of complying with a curfew and with many other bail conditions. Bail was not opposed by the prosecution. Exceptional circumstances – “the same threshold that applies to a person charged with murder or a terrorism offence” – was found and the applicant was granted bail on his own undertaking with a static address. His Honour added:

* At [21]: The nature of the applicant’s offending is not serious and does not pose a risk of harm to the public. It is a nuisance and hard work for the police and others but the risk of harm is very low.
* At [25]: “The notion of unacceptable risk as it applies to bail does not concern merely any risk of reoffending. Rather, it is a question of whether such risk as there might be is unacceptable. The law recognises situations in which a comparatively low level of risk of some very serious crime might amount to the relevant level of unacceptable risk to require a refusal of bail. But, equally, a high risk of the occurrence of something comparatively minor might not amount to an unacceptable risk, because it is a risk that the community will tolerate. In Mr Hall’s case, that type of risk has been tolerated a long time, with great inconvenience to the police no doubt, but nevertheless it is something which has to be tolerated, because the alternative is not acceptable. The alternative is that a man like him remains in custody for days, weeks, or months on end, for something which does not even warrant gaol in the first place. Common sense says that we cannot keep locking people up in those circumstances.”

*TP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2018] VSC 748

The 17 year old applicant was charged with aggravated home invasion, false imprisonment, making threats to kill, theft of a motor vehicle, armed robbery, burglary, theft x2 and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail x3. Noting at [48]-[51] that special considerations apply to children, even those charged with serious offending; specifically s.3B(1)(a) of the **BA** requires the court to “consider all other options before a child is remanded into custody”, his Honour considered that all other options had not yet been exhausted. Youth Justice were prepared to engage with TP and he had not previously been offered intensive bail. TP had the support of his parents and at the time of the alleged offending he had been adversely affected by the death of his aunt. At [49]-[54] his Honour considered that conditions could be imposed to ameliorate substantially the risk of granting TP bail.

*DB*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2019] VSC 53

The 13 year old applicant was charged with a number of Schedule 2 offences which were extremely serious in volume and nature. These included home invasion (stealing), aggravated burglary (person present), theft (x4), criminal damage (x4), possession of controlled weapon, theft of motor vehicle (x2), burglary (x4), theft from a motor vehicle (x4), reckless conduct endangering life (x2), reckless conduct endangering serious injury (x2), using cannabis, failing to stop vehicle after accident, careless driving, unlicensed driving, failing to stop at traffic lights and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. The applicant had no criminal history but some recent charges had been withdrawn on the basis of the presumption of *doli incapax*. Release on a supervised bail program was supported by Youth Justice. The application was opposed by the prosecution. In finding at [47] that exceptional circumstances were established “if only by the age of the applicant”, his Honour referred to the decisions in *Re Whiteside* [1999] VSC 413 per Warren J, *Maloney* (31/10/1990) per Vincent J, *DPP (Vic) v Cozzi* [2005] VSC 195 per Coldrey J, *R v Chung* [2015] VSC 487 per Lasry J and especially *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] where T.Forrest J said:

“Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1). In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.”

Having found that exceptional circumstances were established “if only by virtue of the age of the applicant”, Lasry J held that although the applicant was a risk if granted bail, it was not an unacceptable risk that could not be ameliorated by conditions.

*NB*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2019] VSC 37

The 16 year old applicant was charged with a number of Schedule 2 offences, including 4 counts of armed robbery and 1 count of robbery, alleged to have been committed while he was on bail for other indictable offences. He had no criminal history and had stable accommodation with his mother and stable schooling arrangements. The likely sentence, if custodial at all, was held to be unlikely to exceed the time he had already spent on remand. The application was only formally opposed. Applying and approving the above dicta of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14], Lasry J found that exceptional circumstances were established. The applicant was held not to be an unacceptable risk and bail was granted.

*Rebecca Dillon*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Maxwell P]

[2019] VSC 80

The 23 year old applicant who had a full scale IQ of 61 and was of Aboriginal heritage but did not identify as Aboriginal was charged, inter alia, with criminal damage, causing a false firm alarm to be given and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail for persistent breaches of a family violence intervention order. The applicant was unlikely to receive a custodial sentence and exceptional circumstances were conceded by the respondent. Her pattern of behaviour demonstrated a risk of reoffending but it was held not to be an unacceptable risk and bail was granted on various conditions.

*Timothy Logan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2019] VSC 134

The 36 year old applicant was charged with multiple offences, including child stealing, false imprisonment and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail (to which he intended to plead not guilty) and a number of other offences, including theft of motor vehicle, exceed prescribed concentration of alcohol and two counts of breaching an alcohol interlock conditions (to which he intended to plead guilty). At [52]-[53] Elliottt J noted that if the contested charges were not made out, as counsel for the applicant submitted was likely, then the time already spent in custody would exceed the applicant’s likely sentence. Counsel for the prosecution did not submit to the contrary, save for asserting this did not constitute exceptional circumstances given the severity of the charges, particularly the contested charges. At [66]-[72] Elliott J found exceptional circumstances existed for multiple reasons including the time already spent in custody issue and including the fact that the applicant was being subjected to serious, repeated violence whilst incarcerated. Further there was no unacceptable risk of the sort identified by the prosecution, provided that appropriate conditions were imposed.

*LT*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2019] VSC 143

The 16 year old applicant with a criminal history for violence-related offending was charged with recklessly causing injury and unlawful assault whilst on bail for Schedule 2 offences. The applicant was of Aboriginal descent. Noting that ss.3A & 3B of the **BA** were applicable to the applicant as an Aboriginal child and citing dicta of Vincent J in *Moloney* [SCV, 13/10/1990] and of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14], Elliott J found that exceptional circumstances existed. His Honour also found at [69]-[70] “with the considerable assistance of those who appeared and those who gave evidence at the hearing…[including] the unsworn evidence of the applicant’s grandmother’s intended involvement, including the plan to relocate the applicant” that “appropriate conditions can be imposed so that any risk presented by the applicant may be properly characterised as an acceptable risk.”

*LD*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

[2019] VSC 457

The 16 year old applicant who had no prior convictions and had been diagnosed with ADHD was charged with commission of Schedule 2 offences, including aggravated burglary, when he was already on bail for Schedule 2 offences. Holding “albeit by a whisker” that he had demonstrated exceptional circumstances, Priest JA said at [35] that the factors that combine to establish exceptional circumstances are:

* he is 16, has no criminal priors and is unlikely to receive a sentence of YJC detention;
* he has been assessed as suitable to remain on Youth Justice Supervised Bail and may be suitable for Youth Justice Intensive Bail;
* he has the support of community agencies including Youth Justice and YSAS;
* he has family support including stable accommodation with his family; and
* he is vulnerable in custody (see [33]) and has been the target of others, casing him to isolate himself.

At [36] his Honour held – “not without some hesitation” – that “any relevant risk presented by the applicant can be mitigated by conditions, so as to render the risks acceptable.”

*DR*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2019] VSC 151

The 16 year old applicant – aged 15 at the time of the offending – was born in Sudan and spent time in a refugee camp with his family following the death of his father. The applicant, his mother and two older siblings migrated to Australia in 2007. He was charged with numerous serious offences, including aggravated home invasion, aggravated burglary and recklessly causing injury, these alleged offences having occurred while he was on bail for other indictable offences. At the time of arrest and incarceration in remand in August 2018 the applicant was completing year 10 at school. A report from a forensic psychologist in October 2018 assessed the applicant in remand and concluded he indicated symptoms of depression. A report dated 06/03/2019 from a consultant psychiatrist, Dr Lester Walton, opined that the applicant suffers from chronic complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and had experienced mental disturbance of ‘quasi-psychotic proportions with distortion of perception and a degree of paranoia’ but concluded the applicant is not currently suffering from a diagnosable psychotic illness, and does not require active psychiatric treatment at present. Youth Justice had assessed the applicant as unsuitable for bail due to his non-compliance with previous supervised bail, his behaviour in custody which had involved 9 incidents, two of which allegedly involved assaults on staff members, and the serious nature of his charges. Youth Justice considered the applicant to be at a high risk of reoffending due to his inability to regulate anger, his responses when challenged, and his resistance to participation in rehabilitation programs. Applying dicta of Hollingworth J in *Hang Cao v DPP* [2015] VSC 198 at [7] and of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] and taking into account the age of the applicant, his limited criminal history, his strong family support and the 212 days he had spent on remand [“there is a realistic possibility” that he would not receive a longer custodial sentence] as well as the matters in s.3B of the **BA**, Champion J found exceptional circumstances existed. Further, his Honour considered that strict conditions can be imposed to ameliorate the risks of granting the applicant bail to an acceptable level.

*Zackariah Gloury-Hyde*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

No.1 - [2018] VSC 393

The accused ZGH had been charged with Schedule 1 drug offences. He had established exceptional circumstances – principally the nature and extent of his acquired brain injury and its consequences for his functioning when taken with other factors such as the availability of treatment. His Honour had also concluded that any unacceptable risk of ZGH committing an offence while on bail was amenable to strict conditions. Accordingly his Honour granted bail.

No.2 - [2018] VSC 520

Following his release ZGH breached a conduct condition of bail that he participate in the Hader Clinic 90-day residential treatment program…and follow all lawful instructions and directions of Mr JO & Dr KY”. Breach of a conduct condition of bail is a Schedule 2 offence. The breach involved ZGH failing to follow lawful directions by engaging in sexual activities with a female patient in his room and visiting another male patient’s room. However, Mr JO gave favourable evidence in relation to ZGH returning to the Hader Clinic program. Notwithstanding ZGH’s breach of a conduct condition, his Honour was satisfied that the exceptional circumstances which existed at the time he granted bail remained extant. Furthermore he was confident that any relevant unacceptable risk is capable of amelioration by the imposition of the kind of strict conditions that the Court attached to the original grant of bail. His Honour refixed bail with 15 conditions and refused the OPP’s application to revoke bail.

*SD*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2019] VSC 369

The accused – aged 17 with a criminal history – was charged with multiple offences including armed robbery, aggravated burglary and aggravated carjacking, offences described by Lasry J as “serious, violent and random”. On 31/05/2019 Lasry J found exceptional circumstances made out upon “applying the principles set out in the CYFA and the **BA**, coupled with the delay and the bail program that has been assembled with some considerable effort”. His Honour granted bail, holding that risk could be mitigated by appropriate conditions. However, on 21/06/2019 SD’s bail was revoked “due to several breaches of conditions”.

*KN*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 35

The applicant was a 15 year old child alleged to have committed three successive robbery-related offences with co-offenders. The succeeding offences were in breach of bail. He had no prior convictions, a good history at school with prospects of resuming education and good support from his family and from Youth Justice. If he was found guilty of the offences he would be unlikely to receive a sentence of detention. This was the first time the applicant had been in custody save for a matter of hours on remand. He had found being in custody a shocking experience, made all the worse by being the victim of a recent assault, his facial injuries still evident in Court. Citing dicta of Kaye J in *DPP v Muhaidat* [2004] VSC 17 at [13] and of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14], his Honour found that exceptional circumstances existed. Perhaps the most critical factor was KN’s age, his Honour noting at [41]: “The seriousness of the alleged offending, the repeated and escalating nature of it in spite of multiple undertakings of bail, the strength of the case against the applicant, and a number of other matters, would dictate that were it not for the young age of the applicant, a grant of bail would be highly improbable.” At [52]-[53] Tinney J concluded:

“[I]n the end, it has weighed heavily on my mind, in considering the unacceptable risk test, that the applicant may be at a critical juncture in his life. He is 15 years old with what could be a promising life in front of him. A reasonable education and the opportunities that may present are still things within his grasp. He has not been in trouble in the past. He has the prospect of turning things around. The law would require that he be given every opportunity to do so. With considerable hesitation, and taking account of all of the circumstances, I have concluded that there are stringent conditions of bail which will be such as to ameliorate the risk posed by the applicant to an acceptable one.”

[Bail was subsequently breached by reoffending: see *KN (No.2)* [2020] VSC 490 in **section 9.4.1.3**),

*Broes*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2020] VSC 128

The 32 year old applicant was charged with trafficking in a drug of dependence while on bail for an earlier such charge. She was therefore required to show exceptional circumstances. She otherwise had no prior criminal history and her period on remand was her first time in custody. In granting bail Lasry J said at [46]-[47]:

“Given the extraordinary circumstances in which we now find ourselves, I have come to the conclusion that an already significant delay will be likely exacerbated by the consequences of COVID-19, and I am therefore satisfied that exceptional circumstances have been established. As to the acceptability of release the applicant on bail, I am also satisfied that the imposition of conditions will ameliorate any risk that is involved in her being released.”

*McCann*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2020] VSC 138

This was the third bail application by the 27 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine. He had been on remand for 787 days and a trial listed to commence in the County Court on 04/05/2020 had been adjourned indefinitely on account of the COVID-19 pandemic. As Lasry J put it “The already unacceptable delay in this case will increase dramatically.” In granting bail on strict conditions, Lasry J said at [39]-[41]:

[39] “There is no prospect of a trial in May of this year as a result of the present pandemic and, in all likelihood, little prospect of a trial this year at all. Should the applicant’s trial begin in February 2021, it would result in a period of pre-trial custody of more than three years. Consistently with my first ruling in relation to COVID-19 in *Broes*, this is a delay that well and truly establishes the existence of exceptional circumstances.

[40] I will again speculate on what might occur once the virus spreads into the prison system as it is a matter that I need to keep firmly in mind when considering these circumstances. Once that occurs, as I said in*Broes*, it is overwhelmingly likely that the prisons will be locked down in a way that will make time in custody very difficult for all prisoners. In my opinion, it is going to be necessary to recalibrate the status of those in custody to determine who should be retained in custody and whether any others should be released. That will of course be a matter for the Department of Corrections and the Victorian Government.

[41] Another consequence of this delay on this applicant in particular is that he is not receiving medication for his ADHD whilst in custody. I note the observations made by Croucher J in *Bchinnati v DPP (Vic) (No 2)*[[2017] VSC 620](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/cases/vic/VSC/2017/620.html) about the increased hardship on applicants who are subject to lengthy delays and left untreated. In that matter, Croucher J granted bail to the applicant after a second application, finding that exceptional circumstances existed, partially due to the significant impact delay had on the applicant’s mental health.”

*Nicholls*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Incerti J]

[2020] VSC 189

The 43 year old applicant was charged with multiple indictable offences, including trafficking in a large quantity of a drug of dependence (with respect to three drugs), unlawfully possessing two firearms, dealing with proceeds of crime and refusing to comply with directions to provide information and/or assistance to allow police to access devices seized at his premises. He had been refused bail in the Magistrates’ Court. Having been charged with Schedule 1 offences he was required to show exceptional circumstances. It was conceded by the respondent that the applicant’s chronic asthma renders him more vulnerable due to the increased risk of him becoming seriously ill if he becomes infected by the COVID-19 virus and that COVID-19 has had an impact on the applicant and all other prisoners in relation to their access to employment, rehabilitation programs, time outdoors and activities out of their cells. Incerti J found the exceptional circumstances existed and granted bail with one surety in the sum of $1,500,000 and various conditions including a period of residential rehabilitation and a requirement to attend for judicial monitoring to review bail at the end of the rehabilitation program. At [39] Incerti J made it clear – as she had in *El-Refei [No.2]* [2020] VSC 164 – that extra delay in the criminal process due to the COVID-19 pandemic was not **of itself** an exceptional circumstance but was a factor to be taken into account in conjunction with other surrounding circumstances, including the applicant’s special vulnerability, in determining whether exceptional circumstances existed.

*JF*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 250

The 16 year old applicant was charged with reckless conduct endangering life, thefts of motor vehicles and robberies of soft targets. The offences were allegedly committed in five episodes spanning one month. The applicant had no criminal history although the most recent offending was committed only three days after being granted bail on stringent conditions, including a curfew. It was his first time in custody and Youth Justice were still supportive of bail. He had strong family support and a stable home. The offending was unlikely to attract a custodial sentence. Educational opportunities were restricted in YJC because of COVID-19. Exceptional circumstances were found and bail was granted.

*Felicia Thomas*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2020] VSC 206

The 44-year old Aboriginal woman was charged with burglary and dishonesty offences and assaults and other offences during the period of a community correction order. She had been refused bail twice by the Magistrates’ Court and had been on remand for over 2 months. She had a long criminal record and a history of illicit drug use but had never previously been imprisoned. She had had a 6-year period of abstinence until the last 2 years. For the first 7 weeks in custody she had not been prescribed anti-depressant and anti-psychotic medications and her mental health had been deteriorating. She was also suffering from untreated cervical bleeding and a lump in her breast. COVID-19 related delays meant that, if ultimately convicted but not bailed, any resulting prison sentence was likely to exceed and sentence imposed. Bail was not opposed by the respondent. Bail was granted on her own undertaking with conditions.

*JS*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 447

The applicant, a 15 year old child who suffered from autism, ADHD and substances abuse issues, was charged with trafficking in cannabis to a child and related offences. At the time of the alleged offending he was on bail or charged on summons in respect of 6 additional matters. In total he faced 37 charges arising from offending said to have occurred between 22/10/2019 and 04/06/2020. He had been in the care of DHHS since January 2019 and was living at a residential care unit, an arrangement preceded by his mother relinquishing care of him and his grandparents being unable to take over long-term caring responsibilities. Relying on delay, COVID-19 factors and s.3B of the **BA** as discussed in dicta of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14], Coghlan JA was satisfied that exceptional circumstances had been demonstrated. In granting bail, his Honour was not persuaded that the risk of reoffending “would be unacceptable if conditions were put in place to prevent that”. At [68] his Honour noted:

“I observed in the proceedings that cases such as these do not fit well into the criminal justice system and they are cases that are essentially, at the end of the day, about child welfare. Of course, those propositions are of little consolation to the victims of the alleged offending.”

*Byron Exner*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 453

The 55 year old applicant, who worked for 25 years as a Victoria Police member, was charged with offences of stalking, trespass x 2, contravention of a family violence intervention order x 3 involving two separate complainants who are each former partners of the applicant. He had been on remand for over 4 months. At [10] & [11], his Honour set out the relevant principles for “exceptional circumstances” by adopting dicta of Kaye J *in DPP v Muhaidat* [2004] VSC 17 [13] and Lasry J in *Re Brown* [2019] VSC 751 [65]. His Honour found exceptional circumstances based on:

* any period he spent on remand would exceed any sentence he would likely receive if convicted;
* there are arguable issues in relation to the charges;
* the applicant has accommodation available;
* his performance on the CCOs prior to his incarceration was good; and
* his mental health may be deteriorating while he remains in custody.

Further, his Honour was satisfied that with the imposition of appropriate conditions the applicant would not be an unacceptable risk.

*John Assaad*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2020] VSC 561

The 25 year old applicant was charged with conspiracy to murder x 2 and incitement to murder x 2. The charges relate to an agreement between the applicant and his father to engage the services of a ‘hitman’ to murder the applicant’s estranged wife and a pastor at the applicant’s church. His Honour concluded that “based on the likely delay of two or more years before this trial can be heard, the applicant’s lack of prior convictions, and the circumstantial nature of the prosecution case that exceptional circumstances that would justify a grant of bail have been established.”

*Abrhm Chol*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2020] VSC 580

This 19 year old applicant had a diagnosed intellectual disability with intellectual functioning in the extremely low range. He also had a history of substance use, including use of cannabis and Xanax. He was charged with aggravated home invasion, theft of a motor vehicle (three counts), theft, assault with a weapon (three counts), reckless conduct endangering life, possessing a drug of dependence, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, armed robbery, and recklessly causing injury. At [32] his Honour said:

“[T]his Court has previously considered that the youth of an applicant, especially when facing an extended period of remand in adult custody, is of some weight in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been made out. This is particularly so when combined with other factors, including weaknesses in the prosecution case, delay, or vulnerability in custody.”

At [59] his Honour found exceptional circumstances on the basis of the strength of the prosecution case, the delay and the vulnerability of the applicant regarding his age and intellectual disability. His Honour, being concerned about the applicant’s “most serious criminal history for a man so young”, granted him provisional bail and set up a regime of judicial monitoring of the applicant’s compliance. At the 4th such hearing his Honour, upon being informed by both parties that there were no allegations of breach and the applicant has been progressing positively, determined that further judicial monitoring was not required.

*JS*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Kaye JA]

[2020] VSC 606

After her arrest, this 17 year old applicant had attempted to asphyxiate herself whilst detained at Parkville Youth Justice Centre. She was facing charges of aggravated burglary x2, committing an indictable offence (burglary) while on bail, attempted aggravated burglary, burglary, theft of a motor vehicle x 2, attempted theft from a motor vehicle, and five charges of theft. She was also charged with traffic offences arising from the circumstances in which she was pursued and arrested, including unlicensed driving, dangerous driving, careless driving and failing to stop. She had been in custody for 29 days. At [55] his Honour said:

“[T]he assessment of whether exceptional circumstances exist in this case must be viewed in light of the fact that the applicant is a child. Taking that circumstance, and the other circumstances into account, and notwithstanding that the applicant committed the offences with which she is currently charged while already subject to four sets of bail, I am persuaded that she has established the existence of exceptional circumstances in this case, which would justify the release of her on bail.”

*Lindim Aliti*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 647

This 18 year old applicant was charged with a stabbing murder of the 20 year old deceased in the context of a series of physical altercations between groups of associates known to the applicant and the deceased. The deceased’s family was strongly opposed to the granting of bail. In finding exceptional circumstances and grating bail on 15 conditions, including judicial monitoring, his Honour said:

“[T]here are three particular features of the case that weigh heavily in favour of the applicant. First, his age. Second, his lack of criminal history. Third, the fact that he suffers from epilepsy and on the evidence of Professor Cook (from whom a report was provided) that although he has not had any recent episodes of direct epileptic activity, it is not possible to predict with any certainty what might happen in the future. Further, there is risk associated with his condition when he sleeps alone, which is the condition that would apply to him when he is in custody and he might then become subject to the condition known as Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy. Evidence was led on behalf of the applicant that, when he was ordinarily residing at home, the family ensured that he did not sleep alone. In relation to present circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the conditions for prisoners are, in general, more difficult than they would otherwise be. The applicant is subject to lockdown at short notice and he has no access to in-person visits from his family. The only in-person visits that he might have would be as a result of being visited by his legal advisers.”

*Noah Zreika*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 648

This 18 year old applicant was charged with a large number of connected aggravated burglaries, burglaries and thefts on residential and commercial premises across Melbourne with 6 co-accused between 1 December 2019 and 31 March 2020. He had initially been granted bail but that bail was revoked due to alleged reoffending. His Honour found exceptional circumstances were made out on the basis of the applicant’s submissions and granted conditional bail with one surety in the sum of $5,000.

*Emmanuel Deng*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 686

The 20 year old applicant was born in a refugee camp in Ethiopia to Sudanese parents who relocated to Australia a year later. He was charged with affray, armed robbery, intentionally causing injury x 2, theft of a motor vehicle, violent disorder and robbery and with contravening a CCO. There were 7 coaccused, 6 of whom fall within the Children’s Court. The applicant was recently assessed as displaying symptoms of PTSD. His Honour found exceptional circumstances from a combination of the weakness of the Crown case, the circumstances of detention in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the support of the Youth Justice Bail Support Program. Further, if he was to remain in custody until the hearing listed on 15/02/2021, the period of remand would “quite likely exceed any sentence he was likely to receive, particularly a sentence potentially in combination with another CCO”.

*Tomas Cugurno-Pfabe*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2020] VSC 687

The 26 year old applicant was charged with statutory murder, the foundational charge being armed robbery. The prosecution case with respect to armed robbery appears to be very strong but the case for statutory murder faces a significant hurdle as to causation. Her Honour said at [54]: “I accept that the applicant has shown favourable personal circumstances. The availability of treatment and support in the community is of some weight, particularly in combination with delay, his absence of a criminal history and that the applicant is in custody for the first time. In my consideration of exceptional circumstances, I also take into account my ultimate finding that there are an absence of factors to suggest the applicant poses an unacceptable risk if granted conditional bail.”

*Harry Dickenson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2020] VSC 721

This 26 year old applicant was charged with murder in the circumstances of “a drug deal gone wrong” and had spent 300 days on remand. The deceased was alleged to have been shot at the time he approached the applicant’s residence and an eye witness has given evidence that the deceased himself was armed with a sawn-off shot gun. His Honour found exceptional circumstances from a combination of the real and substantive issues that have been raised in relation to the weaknesses of the case against the applicant and the very substantial supports that have been put in place if bail were granted. At [45] his Honour noted: “Further, despite the very chequered background of the applicant, much of it has a very strong connection with his previous ongoing drug use. In the strict regime that has been put in place, any ability to take drugs has effectively been curtailed as any lapse will be almost immediately be detected and will result in bail being breached and the applicant being placed on remand again.”

*AP, IT, NT, DP & JR*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 730

On 16/06/2020 during a fight in the carpark of Brimbank Shopping Centre a 15 year old boy was stabbed once to the chest and died. On 22/10/2020 11 persons – 9 children and 2 young adults were charged with his murder. Initially between 17/06/2020 and 06/08/2020 the coaccused were charged with the less serious charges of violent disorder and affray. All 9 children were bailed on these charges either by police or by the Children’s Court. Both adult coaccused were remanded in custody. These 5 bail applications by the 5 youngest co-accused proceeded on 28/10/2020. The ages of the 5 applicants at the date of the alleged offending were: AP 13y6m, IT 13y5m, NT 14y6m, DP 14y5m & JR 13y6m. It is not alleged that any of these 5 delivered the fatal blow. Three of the remaining child coaccused were 16y and the fourth was 17y. The 2 adult coaccused were 20y & 23y. In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail to each of the 5 applicants Coghlan J noted at [41]-[50]:

* **Delay**: The Crown conceded a probable delay of about 2 years. Coghlan J said of this: “I regard a two year delay for a young or very young offender as being extreme. That is particularly so for a group of applicants who have not previously being incarcerated (except for a brief period on remand).”
* **COVID-19 Pandemic**: Conditions for all persons detained in Victoria are more onerous than they ordinarily would be. In particular, it is not possible for persons to have visitors, particularly onerous for young offenders.
* **Nature of detentions**: Persons of the age of the applicants would not ordinarily be detained in a Youth Justice Centre even while serving a sentence. The possibility of exposure to older young men with substantial involvement in the criminal justice system is possible.
* **Youth**: All very young and *doli incapax* will be raised for AP, IT & JR.
* **Performance on bail**: Although there have been some breaches of bail, individual compliance has been quite good.
* **Youth Justice Bail Support Program**: Each applicant has had substantial support. Access to schooling is much improved. No applicant has committed any further offence.
* **Absence of Prior Convictions**: None of the applicants have prior convictions although some had prior involvement with the youth justice system.
* **Section 3B of the BA**.

*VN, AK, CN*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2020] VSC 782

VN [aged 16y6m], AK [aged 16y2m] & CN [aged 17y7m] were three of the remaining four youth coaccused. In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail on strict conditions to each of these 3 accused, Coghlan JA said that his reasons in VSC 782 should be read in conjunction with his earlier reasons in VSC 730.

*IT (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 636

On 29/06/2021 Coghlan JA had revoked IT’s bail as a result of IT having been arrested and charged with affray, robbery, violent disorder, recklessly causing injury and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. The parties accepted that the issue on IT’s new application for bail was whether or not the respondent had shown that the applicant was an unacceptable risk that he would, if released on bail, either endanger the safety or welfare of any person or commit an offence while on bail. Youth Justice Bail Service had prepared a comprehensive draft plan for the applicant if he is to be released on bail. That plan addresses a number of the difficulties IT has had in the past. Coghlan JA was satisfied that IT does now have a better understanding of what is required of him. It also seems clear that those dealing with the IT have a clearer understanding of him following Dr Treeby’s report. That is particularly so relating to his intellectual functioning and his difficulties with communication. His Honour was satisfied that with the imposition of appropriate conditions IT would not constitute an un-acceptable risk if released on bail. Bail granted on conditions.

*AK (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 637

The circumstances were very similar to *IK (No 2)*. AK had been in custody for 3 months which is his longest period of detention. Youth Justice reported that AK appears to have a better understanding of the need to not associate with his co-accused, both in his interest and their interest. YJ have prepared a Plan and Timetable for AK. Coghlan JA was satisfied that with the imposition of appropriate conditions AK would not constitute an unacceptable risk if released on bail.

*ST*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 379 {date of order was 18/12/2020}

ST [aged 15y at the time of the alleged offence] was the only one of the 11 persons charged with murder who remained on remand. The respondent conceded that exceptional circumstances were made out because of delay, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ST’s youth and the absence of prior convictions. In finding, contrary to the respondent’s submission, that ST was not an unacceptable risk, Coghlan JA said at [10] that the most important matter in support of the bail application was a Youth Justice Bail Service report which stated that:

* ST has strong family support;
* ST had education arranged for year 11 in 2021 and had participated in educational opportunities while on remand;
* ST appears to have no mental health problems; and
* On bail ST would have the support of 4 support services, as well as school holiday programs and referral to a job readiness program.

This bail was revoked by Coghlan JA on 29/06/2021 due to further offending whilst on bail and breaches of bail conditions.

*ST (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 876

The matters that ST was on remand having been dealt with by imposition of an adjourned undertaking and the family arrangement of being settled in Queensland now being in place, exceptional circumstances were conceded by the Crown. Notwithstanding much material to demonstrate that the applicant had proved himself to be an unacceptable risk by further offending, Coghlan JA was satisfied that “with the supervision of his father in Queensland, the risk which plainly exists might be reduced to a not-unacceptable level”.

*GG*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Incerti J]

[2021] VSC 12

The 16 year old Aboriginal applicant who had been diagnosed with mental health issues was charged with armed robbery and other Schedule 2 offences while on bail for a Schedule 2 offence. Exceptional circumstances were established. Held that there was no unacceptable risk for applicant to be released on bail with 13 conditions.

*HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen*

[Court of Appeal – Maxwell P & Kaye JA]

[2021] VSCA 64

**In this appeal the decision of Tinney J made 6 days earlier in [2021] VSC 96 was overturned.**

The appellant was an intellectually disabled 15 year old Aboriginal child who was facing a large number of charges including attempted armed robbery, burglary, theft, criminal damage, theft of motor vehicles, obtaining property by deception, unlawful assault, unlicensed driving, careless driving & 67 charges of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. Five weeks before the appeal but after all of his alleged offending had occurred:

* the appellant had been placed on a diversion on 14 other briefs;
* he had pleaded guilty to a consolidation of 9 other charges which were found proven and dismissed on the basis that he had already spent 27 days on remand; and
* 4 other sets of charges were struck out on the basis that he was *doli incapax* at the time of the alleged offending.

The appellant has had Child Protection involvement from the time of his birth. Throughout his infancy and early childhood he was exposed to family violence in the home, he experienced chronic neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse, and he was a witness to the sexual abuse of his older half-sister. For a substantial time, he had little contact with his mother. Until recently, he has had no contact with his father since 2012 when he was 7 years of age. The supervised bail plan proposed by the Youth Justice Bail Service was to work towards reuniting the appellant with his father to try to develop a positive family connection which might assist to divert him from his offending behaviour.

The appellant and his younger brother had entered the care system in July 2013. Since then he has had 70 short-term home-based care placements. During one placement he was sexually abused by another young person at the home. He has a full scale IQ of 47, with a severe global speech and language disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He has also been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and symptoms of Complex Developmental Trauma as a consequence of the significant trauma to which he was subjected during his childhood. The appellant has been assessed as having the equivalent functioning of a 4 to 6 year old child. He has also been assessed as having an inability to generalise his learning and retain information to develop appropriate insight. Accordingly, he will repeat patterns of behaviour, and while it appears that he understands his behaviour is wrong, his functioning does not allow him to make appropriate decisions.

It was common ground that exceptional circumstances were made out. It was also conceded by the appellant that there was a risk of reoffending. The sole issue on the appeal was whether that risk was unacceptable when assessed ‘**relative to all the circumstances**’. In granting bail the Court of Appeal held that the risk was acceptable, taking into account the following five circumstances detailed at [55]‑[61], each of which it described as being “of significant weight”:

1. **Age**: Although the appellant is 15 years of age, he has the equivalent functioning of a 4 to 6 year old child: “Section 3B of the **BA** reflects the underlying principle in the criminal justice system that a decision to hold a child in custody should be made only as of a last resort. In considering whether to grant bail, and in the sentencing process, courts are astute to avoid imposing a term of detention, unless there is no other reasonable disposition available.”

2. **Disability**: The appellant’s low IQ and his personal and psychological profile have resulted in a disability which has been compounded by the traumatic and dysfunctional circumstances of his upbringing from the time of his birth and have resulted in a diagnosis of PTSD and symptoms of Complex Developmental Trauma.

3. **Vulnerability**: The appellant has been “assessed to be extremely vulnerable to the influence of other young people whilst in custody”.

4. **Aboriginality**: The appellant’s Aboriginal heritage, the Court noting that ss.3A & 3AAA(1)(h) of the **BA** “are an important and salutary recognition that cultural connection can play a significant role in the rehabilitation of offenders who are of Aboriginal heritage”.

5. **Unlikely to receive YJC sentence**: The most significant factor is that it was common ground that, due to his age and circumstances, the appellant is unlikely to receive a YJC sentence if he is found guilty of the charges which are outstanding against him. [See #9.4.11 below]

At [62]-[64] the Court said

[62] “The Act does not direct that bail must be granted in a case in which the length of time that an accused is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused would exceed the likely sentence that would be imposed should the accused be found guilty. Rather, s 3AAA(1)(k) and (l) specify that as a consideration which must be taken into account as part of the ‘surrounding circumstances’.

[63] It is, nevertheless, a consideration of significant importance both in deciding whether ‘exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail’ and in considering whether such risk as an offender would present if released on bail is acceptable. Once it was conceded that it is unlikely that a custodial sentence would be imposed (given the appellant’s age and disability and the nature of the offences charged), his continued incarceration pre-trial would be akin to a form of preventative detention. That is, he would be being held in custody solely because of the risk that he might commit an offence in the future.

[64] In the absence of any specific statutory provision, preventative detention is alien to fundamental principles that underpin our system of justice. This is an area of particular concern in relation to young offenders who are denied bail. As the Hon Paul Coghlan QC noted in 2017, in Bail Review: First Advice to the Victorian Government, 80 percent of children who have had bail refused do not go on to attract a term of detention for the offending in question.

Given the above considerations the Court of Appeal held at [73] that “what might in other circumstances have been viewed as unacceptable risk had properly to be regarded as acceptable”.

**Subsequently bail was refused by Beale J on 14 further charges.**

*HA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beale J]

[2021] VSC 443

Subsequent to the granting of bail by the Court of Appeal on 10/03/2021, HA was charged with various offences by 4 different informants and was either charged on summons or released on bail. On 13/07/2021 he was again arrested and remanded in custody on 14 alleged offences committed between 28/06/2021 & 13/07/2021, including attempted carjacking and two counts of reckless conduct endangering serious injury. Before Beale J the prosecution conceded exceptional circumstances. His Honour said at [22]: “I am mindful of what the Court of Appeal said in respect of the applicant’s March bail application about the evils of preventative detention and the risk that remanding the applicant in custody may force him to plead guilty to charges which he might otherwise contest. But the issue remains whether the risk to the community of releasing the applicant on bail is acceptable. Given what has transpired since the Court of Appeal released him on strict bail in March, I am driven to the conclusion that, on the current state of the evidence, it is not.”

*KL*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

[2021] VSC 170

The applicant was a child aged 15 years who was charged with Schedule 2 offences (including affray, intentionally causing injury and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail) whilst he was on bail for Schedule 2 offences. In finding that there were no exceptional circumstances and that the applicant was an unacceptable risk if released on bail, Priest JA said:

[22]-[23] “In my view, none of the matters urged in support of the application — alone or in combination — establish that exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail. In particular, I disagree with the contention that it is unlikely that the applicant will receive a custodial sentence. Even paying due regard to the fact that the applicant is aged 15, and will be dealt in the Children’s Court where general deterrence is not a primary sentencing consideration, having considered the extreme violence of the applicant’s joint attack on his victim on 29 March 2021, and its consequences, I would regard a non-custodial sentence as being remarkably lenient — if not manifestly inadequate — even for a child, particularly when the circumstances of his earlier attack go a long way towards demonstrating that the applicant has a disturbing propensity in the company of like-minded individuals violently to stomp on and kick the heads of supine defenceless victims, with no apparent regard for the potentially harmful effects of so doing. In my view, a sentence that did not involve some form of custody would not be ‘appropriate’: see s.361 CYFA”

[28] “In my view, [the] unacceptable risks [posed by the applicant] are incapable of being rendered acceptable, even by strict conditions. I have no doubt that the applicant’s mother is well-intentioned, and that her evidence was sincere, but I have real doubts that she would be capable of exercising any meaningful control over her son. Further, I do not consider that Youth Justice will be able to provide the level of supervision that would sufficiently ameliorate the unacceptable risks posed by the applicant’s release.

[29] Undeniably, it is a serious thing to consign a child to custody pending the resolution of a criminal charge (or charges). Indeed, in my view, the custody or detention of a child should be avoided unless unavoidable: see s.3B(1)(a) CYFA. Having considered all other options — including releasing him on bail on very strict conditions — I consider that the applicant should be remanded in custody until his next court date in less than a week’s time.”

*Yousuf*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 272

The 21 year old applicant was charged with armed robbery, assault and making threat to kill while on bail for an indictable offence. There was a potential delay of 2 years before trial. He had significant family support and oversight from Department of Corrections which reduced the risk of reoffending to an acceptable level. In finding that exceptional circumstances were made out, principally on “the issue of delay and the applicant’s youth”, Lasry J said at [51]-[52]:

[51] “[O]ver the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Courts are becoming unfortunately inured to this kind of delay. A two year delay for a 21-year-old in custody for the first time is simply intolerable. It remains intolerable despite the fact that it happens frequently and to a large number of people. The likely delay in this matter and the applicant’s young ge are capable on their own of amounting to exceptional circumstances.

[52] Ms Dwyer on behalf of the applicant advanced a further argument that the applicant’s pre-trial period remanded in custody may exceed the sentence that would eventually be imposed should he be found guilty of all the charges…, including the armed robbery charge. This may or may not prove to be so. If this were to occur, it makes the issue of delay all the worse. Even if this were not to occur, the period of delay in this case remains very significant. It is not a qualifying pre-requisite that a period of pre-trial delay can only be an exceptional circumstance if it exceeds the sentence that would be imposed upon a finding of guilt.”

*Minh Trinh*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beale J]

[2021] VSC 356

The 57 year old applicant was charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of heroin, knowingly dealing with proceeds of crime and related offences.  The applicant had been in custody on these charges since 10 April 2019.  On 7 November 2019, he was committed to stand trial (straight hand-up brief).  His trial was to commence on 27 January 2021 but in November 2020 was vacated because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He made an unsuccessful application for bail in the County Court on 24 November 2020.  There is a s 198B[https://jade.io/ - \_ftn1](https://jade.io/" \l "_ftn1" \o ") hearing (in relation to the prosecution’s DNA expert) listed on 7 July 2021 but the applicant still does not have a trial date.  The County Court has listed his case for mention on 17 January 2022 at which time it is likely that a trial date will be set.  There is a real prospect – indeed it seems on the cards – that his trial will not commence until three years or more after his arrest. In granting bail Beale J referred with approval to *Roberts v R* [2021] VSCA 28 at [37]-[39], *Mokbel v Director of Public Prosecutions* [No 3] [2002] VSC 393 at [9] & [13], *R v Cox* [2003] VSC 245 and *DPP (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) VR 717; [2009] VSCA 26 at [5], ultimately holding at [12] & [16]:

* “[O]ur society will not, and should not, tolerate what is effectively the indefinite detention awaiting trial of persons such as the applicant whilst an investigation such as that currently underway takes place.  … The community will not tolerate the indefinite detention of its citizens with no prospect of charges being tried within a reasonable period.”
* “With respect, it seems to me that in a first world country with a sophisticated criminal justice system it is hardly bold [cf. *El Nasher v DPP* [2020] VSCA 144 [43]] to expect better – much better – than delays of three years or more between arrest and trial, even in a time of pandemic. Applying an objective standard, I regard such inordinate delay between arrest and trial as, self- evidently, exceptional and, save in a rare case (for an example of which see *Re MO* [2017] VSC 557 where the applicant effected admitted he was guilty of trafficking in a large commercial quantity of heroin but was disputing his involvement in other alleged instances of trafficking), as justifying a grant of bail.”

*Karl Ravenhorst*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2021] VSC 481

The 35 year old applicant was charged with armed robbery and other crimes of violence. He had a significant criminal history since 2008, including convictions for trafficking drugs of dependence, aggravated burglary, burglary intentionally causing serious injury and various weapons, driving, dishonesty and breach offences. He had been on remand for 15 months and bail had been refused by a judge in the County Court. If granted bail, the applicant proposed to reside at ‘The Cottage’ in a 16 week residential program based on a therapeutic community model and addressing long term mental illnesses, personality disorders and addiction issues. In granting bail her Honour said at [53]-[56]:

[53] “I am satisfied that the surrounding circumstances, in particular the issues attendant upon the delay to trial and the availability of residential rehabilitation to a man seemingly ready to undertake treatment combine to produce exceptional circumstances that justify the grant of bail.

[54] Turning then to the issue of unacceptable risk, I accept that the applicant does present a risk of the s 4E(1)(a) factors given his history of offending, his past disregard for court orders and his history of drug and gambling addiction. However, I am satisfied that the imposition of stringent bail conditions, including judicial monitoring, will mitigate that risk so it is not unacceptable.

[55] While The Cottage is not a secure, custodial environment, it is monitored as to physical presence, drug use and participation in its programs. In this regard I accept the submission of the applicant that its intensive supervision is the next best thing short of custody. It will afford the applicant the opportunity to address the issues underlying his offending in an immersive program, distance himself from his former associates and lifestyle and gain and implement his capacity for self-reliance and responsibility. If the applicant chooses to leave The Cottage he will not be prevented, but the informant and local police will be notified immediately and he will be liable to arrest for breaching his bail. Similarly the informant and local police will be notified in the event that any other condition of bail is breached.”

*TH*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Fox J]

[2021] VSC 597

This 15 year Aboriginal girl who had no prior convictions was charged with reckless conduct endangering life, dangerous driving, failing to stop on police request, unlicensed driving, theft, theft of a motor vehicle and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. After referring to dicta of T Forrest J in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] her Honour found at [43] that the applicant had established exceptional circumstances:

[43] “I am satisfied that exceptional circumstances have been established. The applicant has stable and suitable accommodation; she is well-supported through VACCA; she is a fifteen year old Aboriginal girl; she has no prior convictions; she has never been in custody before; she will be supported by Youth Justice whilst on bail; and finally, she is very unlikely to receive a custodial sentence for the alleged offending and any time spent on remand would likely exceed the ultimate sentence imposed.”

In granting bail, her Honour found at [49]-[52] that TH was not an unacceptable risk:

[49] “The applicant is an Aboriginal child. Although Aboriginal people make up only 1.5% of the young people aged ten to twenty three years in Victoria, they make up 15% of children and young people aged ten to seventeen years under Youth Justice supervision (in the community and in custody): *Commission for Children and Young People, Our youth, our way: inquiry into the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the Victorian youth justice system, 2021*, p 21. According to [the Commission’s] report:

‘Any period in custody can be harmful to a child, and can impair healthy development and exacerbate trauma and mental illness: p.24.

Aboriginal children aged 10 to 15 years are substantially over-represented in, and disproportionately harmed by, youth justice custody. Custody removes Aboriginal children from their families, communities, Country and culture and dislocates them from their protective factors. It often exacerbates existing mental health concerns among Aboriginal children and young people, and creates new ones’: p.25.

[50] In her letter to the Court, Ms Connell [VACCA Nugel Program] states that the applicant has experienced multiple developmental traumas, but has shown great resilience and courage. She describes the applicant as an intelligent and capable young person, with many strengths. VACCA continue to support the applicant, including encouraging and exploring educational options, facilitating cultural connections and supporting her mental health.

[51] The applicant engaged positively with Youth Justice throughout her assessment. She intends to continue her education and will be able to attend school on-site twice a week. She has agreed to attend a VACCA women’s group, which will provide strong, positive role models. Youth Justice described the applicant as respectful, open, engaging and optimistic. She admitted her substance use, and it is anticipated she will be allocated an AOD outreach worker through the Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS) and engage in weekly appointments.

[52] In my view, there are a number of available conditions that will mitigate risk. They include supervision by Youth Justice, mandated compliance with Youth Justice directions, a non-association condition and a curfew. The applicant has not previously had the support of Youth Justice, and she does not have a history of breaching special conditions of bail. Whilst there is of course some risk of reoffending, I have concluded that with appropriate conditions the risk is not an unacceptable risk.”

*DPP (Cth) v Carrick (a pseudonym)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 696

The 14 year old autistic respondent was charged with two offences. The first charge concerns his alleged membership of a terrorist organisation contrary to s 102.3 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)* (‘*the Code*’)*.* The second charge alleges advocating terrorism contrary to s 80.2C of *the Code*. The alleged offending began when the respondent was 13 years old and continued past his fourteenth birthday in September 2021. He was arrested and charged two days before the application for bail was heard in the Children’s Court [CCV]. The charges are based on a number of utterances by the respondent about terrorism and his expressed intention to engage in terrorist behaviour. He also expressed his affection for and allegiance to terrorist organisations. Much of this arose over a period between July and October 2021 in communications between him and an online covert operative. Portions of these communications were before the CCV in the form of a summary and are part of the brief of evidence being compiled against the respondent. The respondent was granted bail by the ChCV, Lasry J saying of this at [30]: “His Honour had obviously given the matter careful thought and crafted strict and detailed conditions to deal with the minutiae of the risk that had been litigated.”

On the Director’s appeal, exceptional circumstances justifying the grant of bail were conceded by the DPP. The issue was whether it was reasonably open for the CCV to find that the risk of the respondent’s release on bail was acceptable. The respondent had been assessed as suitable for Youth Justice supervised bail and significant supports were in place to ameliorate risk. Lasry J dismissed the appeal, noting at [40]-[43] that-

* The bail conditions set by the CCV are detailed and strict. If they are complied with there will be no opportunity for this 14 year old boy without any prior criminal history to offend. The spirit of the conditions also makes it clear to the respondent that he is being carefully monitored by a number of people including mental health professionals, teachers, the police and his family as well as the Court itself.
* Notwithstanding the seriousness of the allegations and the consequences if what was being described by the respondent in his online communication was carried into effect, it is important to keep in mind that the law requires children to be treated differently, even in a case like this: see *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14].
* The CCV did not fail to give proper weight to the surrounding circumstances as the Director contends. His Honour was conscious of the nature and seriousness of the alleged offending and the nature of the risk posed by the respondent. I am unpersuaded that a different order should have been made.

**Subsequently bail was revoked following allegations that the accused child had breached his conditions of bail by conducting Google searches on an iPad and attempting to send an email from an iPad when at school. The Google searches involved topics such as ’10 ways to cover up a murder’, ‘how to murder’, ’16 steps to kill someone and not get caught’ and references to a school teacher.**

*Re Thomas Carrick (a pseudonym)*

[Children’s Court of Victoria – Judge Vandersteen]

[2022] VChC 4

On 19/10/2022 the child TC made a new application for bail and bail was ultimately granted. At [25]‑[26] it was conceded by the respondent that it was open for the Court to find that the new facts and circumstances upon which the applicant relied had arisen since the revocation of bail:

* a defence-sourced report concluded that TC was doli incapax for the period he was 13 years old;
* ongoing delay;
* TC’s proposed enrolment at a new school;
* Religious mentoring/engagement with a shiek recommended by the Victorian Islamic Council; and
* Support from a specialist support coordinator.

His Honour found at [61] that TC had established exceptional circumstances:

“Ultimately, I accept by way the combination of factors put on TC’s behalf, being his age at the time of the offences, no prior criminal history, no subsequent history/offending, the strength of the prosecution case and presumption of *doli incapax* in relation to charge 1, TC’s mental health vulnerabilities, TC’s time in custody since the revocation of bail and his vulnerability in custody, delay, the possible sentence outcome not necessarily involving a term of detention, the availability of Youth Justice Bail Program, religious mentoring together with family support and stable residence that exceptional circumstances exist to justify granting bail. In coming to this conclusion, I have had regard to the protection of the community as the primary consideration and the best interests of TC as a primary consideration.”

In granting bail his Honour ultimately found that risk of re-offending can be rendered acceptable by appropriate conditions, saying at [62]-[71]:

[62] “In *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 the Court of Appeal stated at [54]:

‘Whether a particular risk is acceptable must be viewed in light of the circumstances. Those circumstances may be such as to render acceptable a level of risk which in other circumstances would be unacceptable.’

[63] I accept that TC poses a risk. However, when having regard to what is proposed if he was granted bail in my view that risk can be ‘rendered acceptable’.

[64] In coming to this conclusion, I do not accept the CDPP submissions that given TC’s age, diagnosis of autism, mild intellectual disability and oppositional defiance and the pervasive thoughts he has maintained in relation to terrorism and violence that despite what was submitted on TC’s behalf, he would remain an unacceptable risk.

[65] What is proposed on TC’s behalf in reducing the risk is an extensive and extremely stringent array of bail conditions.

[66] At no time would TC be unsupervised whether at home or otherwise.

[67] The teaching ratio at school would be 1:1.

[68] It is proposed that here be the continual removal and limits to TC to the internet.

[69] His residence is stable. His family are very supportive. The added addition of KB to the home will greatly assist TC’s parents. KB’s involvement essentially closes any gaps where TC would be otherwise unsupervised.

[70] The ongoing religious mentoring presents an avenue for TC to discuss religious matters with a scholar/Sheikh that has been recommended by the Islamic Council of Victoria and endorsed by Youth Justice.

[71] Youth Justice have provided a report supportive of bail and TC’s suitability on the intensive bail support program. Youth Justice continue to engage Ms [name deleted] and are guided by her expert advice. Ms [name deleted] was of the view that the risk TC being bailed can be managed within the confines of the Youth Justice recommendations.”

**Ultimately, after a contested hearing, Magistrate Fleming ordered that the criminal proceedings against TC be permanently stayed: see [2023] VChC 2 summarised in section 3.3.4.1.**

*Re Harley Brown*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Niall JA]

[2021] VSC 738

The 27 year old applicant was charged with bail offences and assaulting and resisting an emergency worker on duty. He was intellectually disabled (IQ 48) and reliant on support and had previously been found to be unfit to plead. Exceptional circumstances were conceded. In granting bail Niall JA said at [63]-[64]:

“[A]s the Court of Appeal said in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [64], in the absence of any specific statutory provision, preventative detention is alien to fundamental principles that underpin our system of justice. It undermines the system of justice to use remand as a form of preventative detention to protect against the risk of criminal behaviour caused by mental impairment. Given the applicant’s very poor level of comprehension, the imposition of conditions directed to him are unlikely to be of much utility in protecting against further offending unless the applicant has assistance with compliance.”

*Re BJ*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 742

The applicant BJ is an aboriginal child. Not long after being released on youth parole, he was charged with offences including theft of a motor vehicle x 4, armed robbery, false imprisonment and aggravated burglary. He was subsequently also charged with theft and burglary. His behaviour on bail was unsatisfactory and on remand was relatively unsatisfactory. At [5]-[6] Coghlan JA said:

“He has the advantage of the law regarding his rehabilitation as being more significant at this time in his life, than punishment, although punishment is not irrelevant. It is not clear to me that the applicant would necessarily receive a term of detention which would exceed the time that he has already spent on remand or, that by the time the matter comes to be completed, he might be detained for a period greater than the period of his detention. Because of his youth in particular and because of that likelihood, I am satisfied that exceptional circumstances are made out.”

Holding at [8] that only a foolish person would conclude that the applicant was not “a risk and a fairly significant risk of reoffending on bail”, his Honour found at [9] that “by the imposition of these conditions…the risk will be a not unacceptable one.”

*Re Marino*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Niall JA]

[2021] VSC 769

The 45 year old applicant was on bail for 4 other sets of charges. He was refused bail by a magistrate on a single charge of contravening a conduct condition of bail on the basis that there was an unacceptable risk that he would commit an offence while on bail in the absence of stable housing. There was a real question as to the applicant’s fitness to plead and even if fit to plead and found guilty “it is likely that his mental state, homelessness and other features would reduce his culpability to a significant degree”. There was a real chance that the offending would not attract a custodial sentence. At [41]-[43] Niall JA said:

[41] “There is a risk that if released on bail the applicant will offend. That risk is elevated because the applicant is homeless and not easy to support in the community. Recent efforts to connect the applicant with crisis accommodation and other supported accommodation services have been unsuccessful, largely because his psychiatric illness makes it difficult for him to engage with referral processes. Nevertheless, I am not persuaded that the risk is escalating to any appreciable degree.

[42] **Although the assessment of risk for the purposes of deciding whether or not to grant bail has a protective purpose, it should be remembered that bail is not designed as a means of preventative detention. Still less should it be used as an alternative to stable housing in the community.**

[43] I do not consider in this case that the absence of a static address means that bail must be refused. The applicant has not been easy to support and presents challenges to those individuals and organisations who would seek to help him. He also has presented challenges to police. Nevertheless, I am not persuaded that, for the purpose of deciding whether or not to grant bail, the applicant presents an unacceptable risk.”

*Re Johnson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 800

The 18 year old applicant was charged with murder, the prosecution alleging that he stabbed the deceased in the neck during an altercation in a park. The applicant was on bail on 3 matters and on summons on 3 other matters. He had a history of anxiety depression and drug use. In finding exceptional circumstances and releasing the applicant on bail with 23 conditions, Lasry J said at [63] & [68]:

[63] “This application tests the bail principles to a degree. The prospect of an 18 year old being held in custody for the next 18 months seems to me to be at odds with a volume of jurisprudence about youths in custody and the deleterious effect that has on them and their prospects of rehabilitation: See *R v Mills* [1998] 4 VR 235, 241; *Azzopardi v The Queen* [2011] VSCA 372 [34]‑[36]. In my view the sentencing principles pertaining to the rehabilitation of youthful offenders have some relevance in applications such as this. However, it must also be recognised that I am not sentencing the applicant but hearing his application for bail in circumstances where, in about 18 months, it could be very likely that he will be facing a lengthy prison sentence. If the time between now and the hearing of the applicant’s trial can be used to improve his personal circumstances and divert him from any further offending then his overall circumstances will nonetheless be improved.”

[68] “In my opinion, though the charge of murder is of the utmost seriousness, I do not regard it as certain by any means that the applicant will be convicted of that offence by a jury. Whatever the fate of the foreshadowed self-defence argument, there will be an issue of substance in relation to proof of the element of intent. In addition, there is the youth of the applicant together with the fact that he is in adult custody at Barwon Prison as afflicted by COVID-19 restrictions and the reality of a further 18 months or so of that being the case. Those matters, in combination, establish exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail.”

*Re Khoshaba*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2022] VSC 54

The 39 year old applicant was charged with home invasion, theft, intentionally causing injury and bail offences. Applying the test set out by Lasry J in *Re Strachan* [2021] VSC 538 at [27] Champion J found exceptional circumstances were made out by a combination of onerous conditions in custody, delay and the availability of treatment and bail support services. Further the applicant was not an unacceptable risk if released on bail on conditions. In rejecting the applicant’s proposal that he wear an ankle bracelet capable of providing evidence of his physical location, Champion J said at [97]:

“Whilst I accept that there may be cases where such a device can prove a valuable adjunct to bail conditions, in the applicant’s circumstances and in the circumstances of the present case, I do not consider his present and future situation with respect to a grant of bail to presently justify the wearing of such a device. **The affixing of an ankle bracelet to a person’s body represents a considerable imposition on privacy and freedom, and to take the step of imposing a permanently worn bracelet for a significant period of time is a decision warranting the most careful consideration, and not to be taken lightly.** In forming this view I have taken into account a key purpose of the device is to contribute to reducing the risk of flight by identifying the applicant’s location should he abscond, or to identify breaches of other conditions bearing a connection to his physical location at any one point of time. In his circumstances I do not regard the applicant as a risk of flight, and should he breach any residential conditions by absconding from The Cottage, I am satisfied his absence will be picked up quickly by the usual means of day to day attendance, and surveillance. I am satisfied that any absence will be reported to the informant, or his delegate, quickly.” [emphasis added]

*Re ER*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Kaye JA]

[2022] VSC 88

The 17 year old applicant was charged with offences including aggravated home invasion, threaten serious injury, burglary, assault, criminal damage, theft and breach of bail. The offences were allegedly committed while he was subject to two sets of bail on charges including theft and breach of bail. The applicant had a stable home environment, an education opportunity and the support of the Youth Justice Bail Support Service. He had no prior criminal history and had been in custody for 16 days. In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail Kaye JA said at [31] & [42]-[44]:

[31] “It is well accepted that the youth of an applicant may be a significant factor to be taken into account in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established: *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, [14]; *Re JF* [2020] VSC 250, [32]; *Re Johnson* [2021] VSC 800, [63]. Similarly, in determining whether the risk of an applicant reoffending, while on bail, is unacceptable, the young age and attendant circumstances of the applicant are regarded as important considerations: *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [6], [73]; *Re Andrew* [2022] VSC 46, [25].

…

[42] First and foremost, the applicant is, at law, a child. The provisions of s [3B](https://jade.io/article/281638/section/2109) of the [Bail Act](https://jade.io/article/281638), to which I have referred, have particular application in a case such as this.  The applicant does have available stable living arrangements with his family. It is desirable, if possible, that he be permitted to continue to reside in the family home in the care, and under the supervision, of Ms [R]. It is particularly desirable that he be able to resume his education at [redacted]. In addition, the circumstance that, if the applicant were released on bail, he would be subject to supervised bail by the Youth Justice Bail Service, is a matter of some moment. In his involvement with that service, the applicant would participate in a program that would involve him engaging in constructive activities.

[43] In the present case, it is difficult to hypothesise whether any likely delay in the proceeding might exceed any sentence imposed on the applicant in respect of the charges that are outstanding against him. Nevertheless, in view of the sentencing considerations prescribed by the CYFA, in respect of offenders who are children, it is, at the least, reasonably conceivable that a court might ultimately conclude that a sentencing disposition, which would not involve a period in detention, would be appropriate.

[44] Taking those matters into account, and in particular giving full weight to the applicant’s age and the circumstance that he is a child, I am satisfied that the applicant has established the requisite exceptional circumstances that would justify the grant of bail.”

*Re CO & IJ*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Jane Dixon J]

[2022] VSC 138

CO is a 17 year old Aboriginal child. IJ is a 16 year old non-Aboriginal child. They were charged with aggravated home invasion, intentionally causing injury and related offences, allegedly committed while they were on bail for other offences. One of three complainants was the brother of IJ with whom IJ had a history of animosity. Two other co-offenders, ER aged 17 who is CO’s step-brother and ND, had already been granted bail, the former by Kaye JA: see [2022] VSC 88 summarised above. Ultimately the respondent did not dispute that exceptional circumstances could be made out for CO & IJ for much the same reasons as were found by Kaye JA in *Re ER*. Applying the principles in s.3B of the Act – and in the case of CO the principles in s.3A – her Honour was satisfied that the conditions proposed were sufficient to make any risk acceptable.

*Re GA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Fox J]

[2022] VSC 148

The 13 year old applicant was charged with burglary, theft of motor vehicle, reckless conduct endanger life, drive in manner dangerous, drive at speed dangerous, careless driving, unlicenced driving, enter intersection against red traffic light (two counts), handle stolen goods and commit an indictable offence whilst on bail. At the time of this alleged offending, the applicant was on bail in relation to seven matters, and charged on summons in relation to three matters. The applicant had no prior criminal history and was not enrolled in school although he wants to return to school. He has strong support from his mother and older brother who are willing to assist him to comply with all bail conditions. The respondent conceded that it was open to the Court to find exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances established, including stable accommodation, 13 years old and presumed to be *doli incapax*, vulnerable in custody due to low age and low cognitive functioning and unlikely to receive a custodial sentence. The evidence provided the Court with some confidence that Youth Justice can work effectively with the applicant. In finding that GA was not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with appropriate conditions, her Honour said at [68]:

“The applicant is a young child. Detention of young children must remain a position of last resort; they should not be locked up as some form of preventative detention. As the Court of Appeal stated in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [64]:

‘In the absence of any specific statutory provision, preventative detention is alien to fundamental principles that underpin our system of justice. This is an area of particular concern in relation to young offenders who are denied bail. As the Hon Paul Coghlan QC noted in 2017, in *Bail Review: First Advice to the Victorian Government,* 80 percent of children who have had bail refused do not go on to attract a term of detention for the offending in question. Given the longstanding concern of the criminal justice system – and the community- to keep children out of custody wherever possible, these are alarming statistics.’”

*Re KA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beach JA]

[2022] VSC 277

The 13 year old applicant of Sudanese descent had no prior convictions and faced 49 charges laid by 8 informants between 05/12/2021 and 10/03/2022 and was on summons for 9 further charges allegedly committed in December 2021. The charges include some very serious allegations of robberies and armed robberies committed by the applicant in the company of others in public places (including one or more shopping centres, railway stations, bus stations and a service station), events undoubtedly very traumatic for the victims, all of whom could reasonably have been described as ‘soft targets’. KA is the youngest of those charged. His co-accused are variously between one year and five years older than him. In 2020 KA relocated interstate to live with his father. In July 2021 he returned to Victoria where he lived with his mother and siblings until being remanded in custody (first in January 2022 and secondly in March 2022). His parents are proactive and are respected members of the community. They love and support their son. In finding that KA had demonstrated exceptional circumstances and that he was not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with strict conditions, Beach JA drew a strong comparison between a 13 year old child and an adult and said at [28]-[41]:

[28] “If this were a case involving an adult alleged to have committed the same offences in the same circumstances as the present applicant, there could be no doubt that bail would have to be refused. Of critical importance in the present application, however, is s 3B of the Act and the principles and considerations which must be taken into account when determining whether or not to grant bail to a child: see generally *Re Application for Bail by JF* [2017] VSC 139 (Lasry J); *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 (T Forrest J); *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372 (Priest JA); *Re JF* [2020] VSC 250 (Tinney J); *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 (Maxwell P and Kaye JA); *Re GA* [2022] VSC 148 (Fox J). Relevantly, s 3B lists a number of mandatory considerations which must be taken into account in making a determination under the Act in relation to a child…

[29] In *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, T Forrest J had to consider a bail application made on behalf of another 13 year old child. As to the issue of exceptional circumstances in such an application, his Honour said at [14]:

Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1). In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.

[30] In the present case, notwithstanding the very serious and concerning nature of the charges that have been laid against the applicant, I am persuaded that the applicant’s young age, and the steps that have been taken to place him back into the community and an appropriate place of education, constitute exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail.

[31] In so concluding, I have not overlooked any of the surrounding circumstances referred to in s 3AAA of the Act, which are required to be taken into account in considering whether exceptional circumstances exist: see s.4(3) of the Act. While a number of the individual surrounding circumstances identified in s 3AAA of the Act are of varying relevance in the present case [for example the matters referred to in ss.3AAA(1)(c), (i), (m) & (n)], the length of time he is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused [s.3AAA(1)(k)] and the likely sentence to be imposed [s.3AAA(1)(l)] are matters of greater significance than some of the other surrounding circumstances, particularly given the possibility that the applicant might not be sentenced to any detention having regard to ss 360 and 361 of the CYF Act (notwithstanding the seriousness of the allegations made against the applicant, as to which see s.3AAA(1)(a) of the Act).

[32] Plainly there are individual surrounding circumstances that tell against the applicant so far as the exceptional circumstances test is concerned (for example, the seriousness of the alleged offending, the applicant’s apparent failure to comply with grants of bail made in late 2021 and February 2022 [s.3AAA(1)(d)], and the family violence intervention order made against him [s.3AAA(1)(f)]. However, when all of the surrounding circumstances are properly synthesised, there can be little doubt that, given the applicant’s age, lack of prior criminal history and likely sentencing disposition, the exceptional circumstances test is made out.

[33] The community’s interest in taking the applicant out of detention (with all the downside that the detention of a young person by the criminal justice system entails) is a matter of great importance. The detrimental effects of detention on a young person, to that person and to the wider community, are well known such that every possible step that can reasonably be taken to avoid them by this Court in the proper application of the Act, and more generally should be taken. The real issue in a case such as the present is whether the respondent has established that if the applicant is released on bail, there is an unacceptable risk of the kind referred to in s 4E of the Act.

[34] Undoubtedly there are risks that if bail is granted to the applicant he will reoffend and that such reoffending will endanger the safety or welfare of those whom he chooses to offend against. These are the principal risks of granting the applicant bail. While there are risks that he might interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice or fail to surrender himself into custody if granted bail, it seems to me that these are lesser risks in the present case. The question is whether there are conditions which could be imposed on a grant of bail which would make the risks the applicant poses not unacceptable.

[35] The applicant has the support of Youth Justice. A Youth Justice Bail Support Service Report dated 24 May 2022 (‘the youth bail report’) written by Jayden Rischitelli (an Advanced Case Manager employed by Youth Justice), and endorsed by Julius Oderberg (a Team Leader employed by Youth Justice) was relied upon by the applicant in support of bail being granted to him. See s.3B(2) of the Act which permits a bail decision maker to take into account any recommendation or information contained in a report provided by a bail support service. The youth bail report recommended that the applicant be granted supervised bail on a number of conditions.

[36] At the hearing this morning, both Mr Rischitelli and Mr Oderberg were present in court in support of bail being granted to the applicant. During the hearing, Mr Rischitelli gave evidence, and was cross-examined, about his dealings and interactions with the applicant, the applicant’s progress in custody, and the steps Youth Justice have taken and propose to take in the future in order to support the applicant. Ultimately, Youth Justice recommended that bail be granted on terms that there be judicial monitoring as directed by the Court, and bail conditions requiring the applicant to engage with it and any programs it considers suitable from time to time.

[37] There is considerable substance in the concerns expressed in the informant’s report about the risk of the applicant endangering the safety and welfare of members of the public and committing criminal offences if released on bail. The respondent rightly notes the applicant’s very poor compliance with bail conditions — particularly after his release on supervised bail in late February 2022. In the youth bail report, however, it is observed that ‘breaching numerous bail conditions’ is ‘not uncommon for young people in [the applicant’s] age group on their first period of supervised bail’. Of course, this provides no excuse for the applicant’s failure to comply with bail conditions. It is, however, an explanation to be taken into account along with the myriad of other factors relevant to this case.

[38] The youth bail report states that, at the present time, the applicant ‘has received a direct consequence for the alleged offending due to time already spent on remand’. Mr Rischitelli and Mr Oderberg also state their opinion that, with custody being considered a last resort in respect of child offenders, ‘it is possible that [the applicant] may not receive a custodial sentence for the alleged offending’. This possibility is, of course, directly relevant to the question of whether the applicant’s release now (and under appropriate supervision) involves the taking of a risk which is, in the circumstances, acceptable (or, more correctly, a risk or risks which the respondent has not established to be unacceptable: see s.4E(2)(b) of the Act).

[39] Put another way, at some point in time the applicant will be released from custody. The applicant’s past behaviour suggests that, at that point in time, there will be a risk that he will commit further offences and/or endanger the safety of members of the public. The provisions of the Act are not designed to keep alleged offenders in custody beyond the length of any term of detention or imprisonment that may ultimately be imposed upon them. It is no purpose of the Act to detain or incarcerate (on some protective or preventative or other basis) alleged offenders beyond the term of any sentence which might reasonably be imposed. See further, *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [63]-[64] (Maxwell P and Kaye JA). Moreover, it may be that such risks as are associated with the applicant’s eventual release are better managed during a period when he has the supports currently contemplated in place, and when he is maximally motivated to be of good behaviour, lest he be remanded back into custody for breaching a condition of bail.

[40] Additionally, I note the opinion in the youth bail report that, with ‘appropriate community-based supports’, the applicant has ‘strong prospects of rehabilitation’. Plainly, it is in the interests of the applicant and the wider community that these prospects of rehabilitation be fostered and encouraged to the maximum extent possible now, rather than taking the well-known risks associated with the continued detention of a child within the criminal justice system.

[41] Having taken into account all of the surrounding circumstances, again, as is required by s.4E(3)(a) of the Act when considering the issue of unacceptable risk, I am not persuaded that the risks which the applicant poses if released on bail are unacceptable in all of the circumstances as I have explained them.”

*Re KA [No 2]*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beach JA]

[2022] VSC 363

The young applicant who had been granted bail by Beach JA on 26 May 2022 in the above case attended the Supreme Court on 20 June 2022 for judicial monitoring by Beach JA. The prosecution sought that his bail be revoked on the basis of his breaches of conditions requiring him to attend school, attend appointments and comply with a curfew. Bail was not revoked, there being no suggestion at that stage that the applicant had committed further offences since being released on bail. The judicial monitoring hearing was adjourned to 24 June to investigate the feasibility of the applicant’s father travelling from interstate to look after the applicant while his mother and some siblings travelled overseas from 26 June to 20 July. However, on the morning of 24 June the applicant was arrested and charged with a robbery alleged to have been committed by him, in the company of others, on 18 June 2022. Holding that he had power to hear the prosecutor’s revocation application (as to which see **section 9.5.8** below), Beach JA revoked bail, saying at [21]:

“The applicant’s arrest on the charge of robbery, together with the alleged finding of an item in his home relevant to that charge, puts the matter in a different category. I am now satisfied that the applicant is an unacceptable risk of committing further offences if allowed to remain on bail, and there are no conditions that I can impose which would reduce that risk to an acceptable level. Bail must be revoked.”

*Andrew James Price [No.2]*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Lasry J]

[2022] VSC 441

The 48 year old applicant – who had some subsequent criminal matters but no prior convictions – was charged with what Coghlan JA had described as “a particular serious offence of murder” in circumstances which might be described as a ‘romantic triangle’. In [2021] VSC 31 Coghlan JA had found that exceptional circumstances were established by a combination of factors, principally relating to delay, but refused bail having found that the applicant posed an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses. In this subsequent bail application Lasry J was satisfied at [21] that exceptional circumstances continued to exist based on a combination of factors including the strength of the prosecution case, delay, parity with a co-accused and the applicant’s medical issues and special vulnerabilities, the applicant having been diagnosed with leukemia while on remand. Holding that “a significant list of conditions will be sufficient to ameliorate the risk of releasing the applicant on bail”, Lasry J also noted at [29] that delay, coupled with the applicant’s medical needs, is “not only a matter of exceptional circumstances but goes directly to the question of risk”. In relation to delay Lasry J said at [31]:

“The delay in matters reaching trial is unfortunately all too common as we approach the three-year mark of delay in this case. It is a very long time to be in custody in advance of a finding of guilt, and I have no hesitation in accepting that 20 months’ incarceration for anyone will alter their outlook on their conduct, should they be granted bail and be released into the community.”

On the issue of parity with a co-accused see **section 9.5.1**. Bail was fixed with a surety of $900,000 and 21 conditions.

*Re JK*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2022] VSC 527

The 16 year old applicant, who had no criminal history and was in custody for the first time, was charged by multiple informants with six suites of dishonesty, violence and bail offences allegedly committed between 30/05/2022 & 27/08/2022. These offences included robbery, handling stolen goods, burglary and aggravated burglary. He was also on summons with respect to two counts of attempted robbery, two counts of assault in company and a count of handling stolen goods. Further, he will be charged with robbery and handling stolen goods with respect to an incident on 26/08/2022. In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail on strict conditions Taylor J said at [38]-[42]:

[38] “[The applicant’s] alleged offending throughout 2022 is of concern. It escalated in frequency and seriousness. The applicant had no regard for the welfare of others or of bail conditions. That said, there are notable features common to most of the alleged offending: it was done in company with peers and it was location-specific.

[39] The applicant’s remand has forced an abrupt break in the pattern. The experience has been surprising and unwelcome to him. As noted in the Youth Justice Bail Service Report, his willingness to participate in the Youth Justice program is motivated by his desire not to go back to PYJC. He is willing to remove the co-accused from his social media profiles and otherwise comply with any non-association condition. He is willing to re-enrol in Year 11 at school. While he was resident at the inner Melbourne flat during the last few weeks of his alleged offending, most of the offending occurred while he was living in Cranbourne and, in any event, it is anticipated that he will soon move suburbs again. Further he will, for the first time, have the intensive supervision of Youth Justice in combination with that of his mother. He will have the support of the DFFH. He will not be idle and daily at large in the community. In short, the circumstances in which he was prone to the influence of negative peers and susceptible to offending behaviour will be radically different.

[40] Without fettering the discretion of a sentencing Magistrate, I accept the submission that a non-custodial sentence is the likely disposition when the alleged offending and the matters personal to the applicant are considered. He has no criminal history. The difficulties of his home life are relevant. It follows that there is a genuine concern that further remand would constitute preventive detention. Further, I accept the observation expressed in the Youth Justice Bail Service Report that the applicant is liable to negative peer influence in custody.

[41] I am further of the view that the risk the applicant poses of endangering the welfare of himself or members of the public or of committing an offence whilst on bail can be rendered acceptable by the imposition of appropriate bail conditions.

[42] The applicant’s alleged behaviour during 2022 presents a picture of a young man spiralling out of control. But, as already noted, his remand has forced a separation from his negative peers and surroundings. His dislike for the experience of custody is evident. The intensive supervision of Youth Justice together with the loving but firm support of his mother and the services of the DFFH will provide him with an intermeshed framework that was entirely absent for most of this calendar year. That framework will be reinforced by the spectre of a return to custody in the event that bail conditions are breached.”

*Re BZ*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2023] VSC 216

The 14½ year old applicant, who had no prior findings of guilt but had previous charges withdrawn because of *doli incapax*, had been charged with numerous instances of aggravated burglary, car theft, attempts and offending while on bail. He had previously been remanded in custody twice, for 2 days and 12 days, and bailed several times. On this occasion he had been on remand in youth detention for over 2 months. Lockdowns had resulted in limitations on educational programs and visits by family and professionals. There was an expected delay of at least another 6 months before contested hearings in the Children’s Court. If BZ was found guilty, he was very unlikely to be sentenced to youth detention. Educational and other pro-social supports were available on bail. Exceptional circumstances established. Asserted risks not unacceptable. Bail granted on own undertaking with conditions. At [5] Croucher J said:

“It follows that, notwithstanding the nature and number of the allegations, including multiple breaches of bail within a short space of time, BZ must be granted bail. At his tender age, that is the only appropriate result. He should be living at home with his parents and attending school, not on remand in a youth detention centre for months on end awaiting hearings that are very unlikely to result in incarceration.”

*Re IM*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2023] VSC 360

The 17 year old applicant was one of 9 co-accused charged with murder and kidnapping – he had no criminal history, no adverse bail history and had not been charged with any other criminal offences at the time of the alleged offending although he was subsequently charged with armed robbery x 2, false imprisonment x 2, intentionally causing injury x 2 and affray predating the allegations of murder and kidnapping – the applicant is close with and supported by his family and has suitable accommodation available in the family home – the family have visited him regularly since his remand and have had daily contact with him via Zoom or telephone – exceptional circumstances shown as detailed in [94]-[106] on the basis of a combination of–

* the applicant’s age and vulnerability which is “of central importance”;
* delay and conditions in custody;
* parity with 2 co-accused who had been granted bail;
* the nature of the alleged offending, in relation to which it was noted that the case against him on the murder and kidnapping charges is essentially a circumstantial one;
* availability of treatment, bail support services and education;
* family support and stable accommodation; and
* criminal history and post-offence conduct.

Such risk, as does exist, can be ameliorated to an acceptable level by the imposition of appropriately strict bail conditions, including judicial monitoring. Bail granted on strict conditions.

In relation to s.3B and the fact that the applicant is a child Champion J said at [89]-[93]:

[89] “[S]ection 3B(1) of the Act sets out a list of considerations that the court must take into account when considering whether to grant bail to a child such as the applicant. These considerations make it clear that, when it comes to bail, children are in a special category. As was observed by the Court of Appeal in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [55]:

Section 3B of the Act reflects the underlying principle in the criminal justice system that a decision to hold a child in custody should be made only as of a last resort. In considering whether to grant bail, and in the sentencing process, courts are astute to avoid imposing a term of detention, unless there is no other reasonable disposition available.

[90] Moreover, in an oft-cited passage, T Forrest J held in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, [14]:

Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1). In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of **any** determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child. [emphasis added]

His Honour’s observations have been repeatedly applied by this court: see, for example, *Re RN* [2023] VSC 9, [20] (Priest JA), *Re KE* [2021] VSC 175, [51] (Kaye JA), *Re GG* [2021] VSC 12, [47] (Incerti J), *Re JS* [2020] VSC 606, [24] (Kaye JA), *Re IH* [2020] VSC 325, [33] (Tinney J), *Re Moore* [2019] VSC 344, [18] (Priest JA), *Re LT* [2019] VSC 143, [37] (Elliott J), *Re NB* [2019] VSC 37, [29]–[30] (Lasry J).

[91] That does not of course mean that a child who is alleged to have committed violent crimes should automatically be granted bail. Each case must be determined according to its own facts and circumstances. The non-exhaustive list of surrounding circumstances in section 3AAA of the Act makes it clear that a child’s age is merely one factor (albeit an important one) to be considered: see s.3AAA(1)(h) of the **BA**.

[92] This conclusion is further supported by the guiding principles in section 1B of the Act. When determining whether to grant bail, the court must consider factors beyond the applicant’s circumstances; it must be mindful of broader concerns such as the safety of the community, the presumption of innocence, consistency in decision-making and the need to facilitate public understanding of bail practices.

[93] With the above factors in mind, I turn to considering the merits of the application.”

In relation to various other aspects of his determination Champion J said:

[101] “[On the issue of parity] in my opinion the prosecution case has not advanced to a point where considerations of the strength of the prosecution cases are so materially different to the point that this applicant’s circumstances can be distinguished from those relating to the applications by BM, SQA and MG. The applicant maintained that he has a reasonable prospect of acquittal in the face of what presently amounts to a circumstantial case, with what are asserted to be triable issues in play.”

[111] “The question arose in my mind as to whether it was relevant to the determination of this application that the applicant may be at risk of retribution by others should he be released on bail. In respect of this issue, I accept the submission of both the applicant and the respondent that the safety of the applicant from others is not a relevant consideration in relation to unacceptable risk, except insofar as it may support an argument that he is a more vulnerable individual than he otherwise might have been.”

*Re SQA; Re MG*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2023] VSC 359

The applicants, aged 16 & 17 respectively, were co-accused with IM charged with murder and kidnapping – neither had a criminal history – parity with 17 year old co-accused BM granted bail by Hollingworth J – exceptional circumstances were shown based on substantially similar reasoning to that enunciated by his Honour in *Re IM* and including at [110]-[114] the same dicta in relation to s.3B **BA** that his Honour had enunciated in *Re IM* at [89]-[93] – risk can be rendered acceptable with appropriate bail conditions – bail granted.

Neither applicant was deemed suitable for Youth Justice supervised bail. In relation to that Champion J said at [122]-[123]:

“[I]t appears the primary reason for these conclusions is the seriousness of the allegations and not past behavioural issues. Otherwise, Youth Justice appears to find MG and SQA suitable. Acceptable levels of support are provided by their families, in that they have stable homes and environments which include the opportunity for both to be occupied in the period leading to their trials. It is to be noted that neither has previously been in the custodial setting.”

*Re PI*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Niall JA]

[2023] VSC 481

The 17 year old Aboriginal applicant who had no criminal history sought bail on 9 separate matters brought by a number of different informants. These included 3 charges of aggravated carjacking and some associated offending of armed robbery, unlawful assault, failing to answer bail and theft of a motor vehicle as well as a further allegation of aggravated carjacking. Each of the charges allege that a number of offenders committed an aggravated carjacking on rideshare vehicles using a machete or other bladed weapon and then stealing the vehicle. The alleged offending in relation to the other matters include charges of affray, theft of a motor vehicle, unlicenced driving and armed robbery. In granting bail Niall JA said at [24]-[25]:

“I am satisfied, having regard to the combination of matters, that there are exceptional circumstances justifying bail, and I note that the respondent fairly submitted that it was open to the court to so find. In relation to the risk, I am satisfied that all of these matters, together with conditions, will ensure that the risk of offending while on bail is not unacceptable. It is not possible to eliminate entirely the risk that a person in the position of the applicant poses, and the Act does not require a cast iron guarantee. But even a small risk of offending of this kind represents a very significant matter and one which the court must weigh heavily. Ultimately, I am persuaded that the risk is not unacceptable on the basis of the applicant’s personal circumstances and the supports that are available.”

*Re AZ*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2023] VSC 648

The 15 year old applicant who had no prior convictions but had 14 outstanding matters before the Children’s Court was seeking bail on charges of armed robbery, aggravated assault, theft and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He had the support of Youth Justice bail support services. There was no real contest between the parties that exceptional circumstances exist, his Honour listing at [25] eight non-exhaustive factors that establish exceptional circumstances. Noting at [26] that the real question to determine today is whether AZ presents an unacceptable risk of committing further offences whilst on bail or endangering the safety and welfare of any person”, his Honour concluded at [34] that with appropriate conditions, the risk presented by AZ is substantially ameliorated and is not an unacceptable risk.

*Re PJ*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Incerti J]

[2024] VSC 97

The 16 year old Aboriginal applicant was charged with multiple offences in 4 briefs, including theft, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle, fail to stop vehicle after an accident, fail to stop vehicle at police direction, unlicensed driving, burglary, criminal damage by fire, dangerous driving while pursued by police, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, drive at a speed dangerous, aggravated burglary and commit an indictable offence while on bail, recklessly causing injury and intentionally causing injury. He had been granted Youth Justice Supervised Bail on some of these charges but that bail had been revoked after he was arrested and charged with some of the other matters. The respondent conceded that it was open to the Court to find that exceptional circumstances existed to justify the grant of bail but contended that the applicant posed an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of the general community and of committing an offence on bail, given that his most recent offending occurred while he was subject to Youth Justice Supervised Bail. In granting bail Incerti J said at [70]-[71], [74]‑[75] & [79]-[83]:

[70] “I am satisfied that the applicant has satisfied the burden of showing that exceptional circumstances exist to justify the grant of bail. I note that:

1. the applicant is a child, being 16 years old;
2. the applicant identifies as Aboriginal;
3. the applicant has been assessed as having an intellectual disability. He has also been diagnosed with Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. I note for completeness that no up-to-date psychological or psychiatric testing reports are before the Court;
4. it is conceded that the applicant is unlikely to receive a custodial sentence; and
5. the applicant has never been convicted of an offence in Victoria.

[71] The real issue in this application is whether the applicant represents such an unacceptable risk on bail as to warrant his continued remand. The onus for demonstrating that the risk is ‘unacceptable’ rests with the respondent: s.4D(2) **BA**. I consider that the serious decision to continue the incarceration of any child demands that the risk is demonstrated with cogent evidence to a high degree.”

…

[74] “The Court’s ability to assess the level of risk has been severely hampered by the availability of recent psychological assessments. Nevertheless, the applicant presents with severe intellectual and cognitive disabilities, extreme vulnerability to a custodial setting and an inherent vulnerability as an individual who identifies as Aboriginal.

[75] Most importantly, perhaps, the respondent concedes that the applicant is unlikely to receive a custodial sentence for his offending. Instead, the respondent is seemingly seeking the ongoing remand of a vulnerable child, for the remaining six to eight weeks required for these current matters to resolve (on an optimistic estimate), with full awareness that the applicant is unlikely to receive a custodial disposition. This is a regrettable situation.”

…

[79] “It was nevertheless submitted by the respondent in this case that the applicant has shown a lack of ability to identify his own risk factors, is unable to self-manage his strategies and therefore poses an unacceptable risk of continuing to commit offences whilst on bail despite programs put in place for him. The respondent contends that there is no evidence of ‘breaking the cycle’ before the court.

[80] The problem with the respondent’s submission is that it fails to consider the reasons why the applicant has limited insight and personal strategies to self-manage. The reasons include his age, his intellectual, personal and psychological profile, his trauma background and his identification as an Aboriginal person. The applicant has not had the opportunity to develop personal strategies in custody because, due to factors out of the applicant’s control, he has only had access to one music class in the four weeks he has spent on remand and has not had access to further psychological testing. 106 This is not a criticism of Parkville Detention Centre or Parkville College. As is so often the case, this is a matter of resourcing, not risk. However, it comes as no surprise that the material before the court indicates that further time in custody is likely to have a detrimental effect on his mental health. It beggars belief to understand how keeping a child in custody in these circumstances can ‘break the cycle’.

[81] In the absence of cogent evidence that the applicant poses more than an obvious risk and weighing this against the compelling circumstances that call for a grant of bail, I am not satisfied that the respondent has demonstrated that bail must be denied on step two of the test.

[82] As a result, I consider that the role of the Court in a situation like this is to investigate bail conditions that address the unavoidable risk, while supporting the applicant to change their behaviour. This is a rare opportunity when a vulnerable individual is in a setting that may facilitate rehabilitation. It is these steps that may ‘break the cycle’, as the respondent put it, rather than preventative detention or any sort of custodial sentence. The unsuitability of custody in circumstances like this is further supported by the fact that NDIS resources are sidelined when a participant is in a youth detention centre. There is also growing understanding that the justice system is criminogenic and the earlier a child engages with youth justice, the more likely they will reoffend and become entrenched in the system.

[83] As is true in almost every grant of bail, there will remain a degree of risk. Nevertheless I consider, given the powerful considerations to which I have referred – the applicant’s youth and serious cognitive deficits, his vulnerability in custody and the probability that he will not receive a custodial sentence – what might in other circumstances be viewed as unacceptable risk has properly to be viewed as acceptable.”

Accordingly Incerti J granted bail with a number of conditions, including involvement with Youth Justice, a residential address, a curfew, abstinence from any alcohol or drug of dependence, non-contact with co-accused, judicial monitoring and remotely attending an assessment at the Children’s Court Clinic.

*Re MMA (a pseudonym) (Bail Application)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Gorton J]

[2025] VSC 113

The 18 year old Samoan-born applicant – who was aged 17 at the time of the alleged offending – was charged with multiple serious offences allegedly committed between 16/01/2024 & 30/12/2024 which included affray x 2, assaulting police, robbery x 8, intentionally cause injury, possessing a controlled weapon, attempted robbery and assault, theft and assault, armed robbery and false imprisonment, fail to appear on bail x 2, aggravated carjacking with offensive weapon, theft, use of a controlled weapon and assault, going equipped to steal and possessing cannabis. He had been in custody for 2½ months. In granting bail for 2 weeks, Gorton J said at [2] & [13]:

[2] “It was common ground that the applicant’s status as a child at the time of the alleged offences constituted an ‘exceptional circumstance’ that justified the grant of bail unless there was an ‘unacceptable risk’ that he would, if granted bail, endanger the safety or welfare of a person or commit an offence while on bail or interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice or fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail.”

[13] “I am satisfied that the risk was an unacceptable risk unless bail is for a limited time and on stringent conditions. I am not satisfied, on balance, that the risk was an unacceptable risk if the applicant were bailed for a two-week period on conditions that he reside with his aunt and uncle, observe a curfew, attend the police station three times a week, not carry with him any knives or other weapons, not attend the Melbourne CBD, not associate with certain persons identified by police, and attend the program compiled by Youth Justice. In reaching this conclusion, I have not ignored the fact that the list of persons compiled by the police is likely not exhaustive of persons who might influence the applicant into offending and is difficult, in practice, to enforce.”

*Re Zayneh (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2024] VSC 374

The 39 year old applicant with a limited criminal history was one of 7 co-accused charged in July 2021 with conspiring to import 1.6 tonnes of border controlled drugs. He had been on remand since then. In *Re Zayneh* [2023] VSC 470 Beach JA had found that exceptional circumstances were made out by delay but refused bail on the basis that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of not answering bail. This judgment is summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.3** below.

An appeal by the applicant was dismissed: see *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 which is summarised in **subsection 9.5.9.2** below.

In this subsequent bail application the applicant was granted bail on extremely stringent conditions, including the provision of 6 bail guarantors totalling $1.78 million and 25 conditions including electronic monitoring at his own expense and a requirement that he remain in his residence 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Elliott J had raised with the applicant’s counsel whether any human rights concerns might arise if such a condition were imposed. No point was taken. It was stated that if any issues arose, an application would be made to vary the conditions of his bail in due course. New facts and circumstances shown by the applicant were constituted by a likely 5 year delay, possible 6 year delay before trial. In granting bail Elliott J said at [81] & [90]-[91]:

[81] “I am satisfied [as conceded by the Director] that the delay in this proceeding on its own constitutes exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail.”

[90] “Returning now to the issue of delay. As stated previously, the length of the delay in the proceeding is relevant to the question of whether, if released on bail, Zayneh would pose an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail: *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311, [6]. See also *Bail Act*, s.3AAA(1)(k). In cases of inordinate delay, the risk posed by an applicant must be assessed bearing in mind that the community ‘will not tolerate the indefinite detention of its citizens with no prospect of charges being tried within a reasonable period’: *Mokbel v Director of Public Prosecutions (No 3)* (2002) 133 A Crim R 141, 143 [13] (Kellam J), cited with approval in *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41]. More recently, see *Re Tiburcy* [2024] VSC 163, [71]-[76] (Fox J), being another case arising out of Operation Ironside (though acknowledged to involve ‘not the most serious example of large commercial quantity drug trafficking’: at [74]).

[91] Accordingly, Victorian courts have acknowledged that there will be circumstances where actual or anticipated delay in a proceeding is of such a magnitude that risks which would otherwise be regarded as unacceptable may properly be viewed as acceptable: *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41]. As observed by the Court of Appeal in *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 [7]:

[T]here will come a point where the continued pre-trial detention of a person who is presumed innocent can no longer be justified, notwithstanding the seriousness of their alleged offending and the magnitude of the risk that they will not answer bail. We do not venture to say when that point will occur, either generally or in this particular case, because that will depend upon all the facts and circumstances. (Citations omitted.)

In *Re Zayneh (No 3)* [2024] VSC 726 applications by Zayneh’s wife and mother to vary undertakings given by them in *Re Zayneh (No 2)* were granted.

*Re GS*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2024] VSC 439

The 16 year old applicant was charged with:

* 17 offences alleged to have been committed on 28/06/2024, namely aggravated burglary x 4, theft of motor vehicle x 2, armed robbery, attempted burglary x 2, theft x 2, robbery x 3 and attempted burglary x 3; and
* 4 offences alleged to have been committed on 02/07/2024, namely aggravated burglary, theft, robbery and theft of motor vehicle.

The offences were alleged to have been committed while GS was subject to a summons for another Schedule 2 offence. GS’s “criminal history is not insignificant and includes prior findings of guilt in relation to violence based offending and motor vehicle theft”. Initially bail was granted for 1 week on strict conditions, his Honour saying at [149]-[150]:

[149] “Having considered all the relevant circumstances, including the surrounding circumstances in section 3AAA of the *Bail Act* and the matters specified in section 3B, I was satisfied that exceptional circumstances existed to justify the grant of bail. Although the nature of the alleged offending is serious and the prosecution case cannot be described as weak, exceptional circumstances were established by the combined weight of several factors including GS’ status as a child, his personal circumstances including his upbringing and background and his ability to return to the family home, his difficulties with education (including those arising from the COVID-19 restrictions), the level of support offered by Youth Justice, the Learning Centre and other services, as well as the fact that GS’ time on remand if bail were refused would likely exceed any term of imprisonment imposed.

[150] It was also determined that any risk would not be unacceptable if bail were granted for only 1 week on stringent conditions: see *Re FT* [2024] VSC 158, [51], citing *Re KA (No 2)* [2022] VSC 363, [12] (Beach JA). This was appropriate in the circumstances of this case to allow GS an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the conditions of bail, notwithstanding the clear risks he posed at that time. The grant of bail for 1 week was also appropriate to allow GS’ care team to demonstrate the efficacy of the proposed bail program and associated support services.”

GS complied with all conditions during the 1 week period of bail. His further application for bail was not opposed by the prosecution and his further application was granted, Elliott J saying at [159]-[160]:

[159] “Further, in light of GS’ compliance with his conditions of bail during the 1 week period of bail, his positive and courteous approach with those assisting him since bail has been granted, and the considerable level of support he continues to receive from Youth Justice, the Learning Centre and other services, and his family members, I am again satisfied that if bail were to continue on largely the same conditions, the risk posed would be reduced to an acceptable level.

[160] That said, it is appropriate to continue with judicial monitoring for at least another week. The matter will be listed again next week for that purpose.”

*Re JB*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2024] VSC 549

The 16 year old applicant was charged with, *inter alia*, car theft, attempted armed robbery, armed robbery and aggravated burglary allegedly committed while on bail and summons on numerous other charges. He had been on remand in a youth justice centre for 45 days. When previously on bail on 3 occasions he had been supported by Youth Justice. On this occasion he had been assessed as suitable for a Youth Justice Intensive bail program, evidence about which was detailed at [21]-[29]. He had no prior convictions or findings of guilt. Exceptional circumstances were found for the reasons detailed at [34]-[40]. In granting bail on 8 conditions (including compliance with all lawful directions of the Youth Justice Intensive Bail Program), Croucher J said at [54]:

“I consider that there is a grave risk of preventative detention should I refuse bail. [Counsel for JB] is right to submit that this factor is relevant when assessing unacceptable risk. As Maxwell P and Kaye JA said in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [66]:

‘While each case must be decided according to its own individual facts and by reference to the defined ‘surrounding circumstances’ specified in s 3AAA(1) of the Act, in the present case, the consideration, that it is unlikely that the appellant will be sentenced to a term of detention, was necessarily a most powerful factor in determining whether, if the appellant were granted bail, the risks of him offending, or endangering others, were unacceptable.’”

*Re KL + Re KL (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2024] VSC 734 & [2024] VSC 741

The 13 year old applicant was “charged with a raft of serious offences including motor vehicle theft, aggravated burglary, theft, threats to kill, false imprisonment and assault with a weapon” – presumption of *doli incapax* – this was KL’s second time in custody, having spent 6 days on remand in September 2024 and an additional 9 days in custody since his grant of bail was revoked on 13 November 2024 – exceptional circumstances were established and unacceptable risk was not pressed by prosecution – bail was granted for 1 week – at [66]-[70] Elliott J said:

[66] “There can be no question that exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail, having regard to KL’s age, the supports available to him and his lack of criminal history.”

[67] Leaving aside matters relating to *doli incapax*, the prosecution case in relation to the more serious charges could only be described as strong. The seriousness of some of the charges is difficult to overstate. However, KL is only a child and must be given every reasonable opportunity, consistent with the *Bail Act*, to find his place in our society in a manner that is satisfactory for both him and the community at large.

[68] As for unacceptable risk, the question is far more difficult. Members of our community are entitled to feel that the authorities, including the courts, are here to protect them from invasive and violent crimes the effect of which go to the very fabric of the type of society we live in. KL’s current situation means that the risk he obviously poses could only be considered as being acceptable with the imposition of very strict conditions of bail.

[69] It is clear that the parties to this application have appreciated this and have worked diligently together to include conditions of bail directed specifically at seeking to assist KL and also reduce the real risk that KL would pose if bail were granted. The court acknowledges the importance of this constructive approach. However, there have also been attempts in the past to formulate appropriate conditions of bail which have not resulted in KL acting appropriately or satisfactorily directing his efforts towards rehabilitation and an acceptable course of conduct.

[70] In circumstances where it would appear that previously KL has not fully accepted the seriousness of his situation, I am not willing to grant bail without ongoing court supervision. Accordingly, bail will only be granted for a week.”

At the time bail was granted KL was told directly that “it was necessary for him to comply strictly with the conditions of his bail and that any breach would be treated with the utmost seriousness”. Six days later KL was back on remand charged with further offences while on bail, namely armed robbery, theft of motor vehicle and theft. Elliott J again found exceptional circumstances had been established. However, on the issue of unacceptable risk his Honour refused bail, saying at [27]-[30]:

[27] “As to the question of unacceptable risk, KL has demonstrated an inability to comply even remotely with his conditions of bail... The irrefutable conclusion to draw from KL’s past conduct (including in the last week) is that if he were granted bail again, he would be highly unlikely to comply with almost all conditions imposed.

[28] Leaving aside the further charges laid this week, the charges the subject of this application are very serious and there is a real prospect that KL will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment if found guilty. Observations previously made of attendant risks in relation to children stealing and driving cars warrant repetition: *FT v The King* [2024] VSCA 90, [96].

[29] Further, in circumstances where the presumption of *doli incapax* appears likely to be in issue, the evidence presently before the court does not establish that KL’s ongoing incarceration could be properly characterised as a form of preventative detention. In any event, the very high level of risk posed by KL of endangering the safety or welfare of any other person in our community is such that the prosecution has established it is unacceptable. In light of this finding, it is not necessary to determine whether KL poses an unacceptable risk of interfering with a witness or otherwise obstructing the course of justice in any matter. In short, no conditions of bail are capable of ameliorating the risk to a level that remotely approaches an acceptable risk: compare *Re Dip* [2019] VSC 11, [57]-[59].

[30] As has been observed elsewhere {*FT v The King* [2024] VSCA 90, [96]; see also *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [62]-[63]}, depending on the circumstances, some risk of reoffending on bail, even a high risk, may not be properly characterised as unacceptable. An assessment must be made of the probability of the risk eventuating and the likely harm if it does: *FT v The King* [2024] VSCA 90, [96]. Here, both integers weigh heavily against KL.”

*Re RK*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Niall JA]

[2024] VSC 792

See also **section 9.4.11** below.

The 31 year old Aboriginal applicant was facing 16 sets of charges including 5 counts of unlawful assault, aggravated burglary, intentionally causing injury, persistent contravention of a FVIO and 2 counts of stalking. He has diagnoses of schizoaffective disorder and schizophrenia and a history of substance use. He had spent 239 days on remand in relation to the charges. Exceptional circumstances were found for reasons stated at [17]-[23]. The applicant was not an unacceptable risk, Niall JA stating at [31] (emphasis added):

“Further, I am not satisfied that any of the relevant risks are unacceptable having regard to the overall seriousness of the alleged offending, the surrounding circumstances to which I have already referred (including, in particular, the applicant’s Aboriginality and mental health diagnoses) and the bail conditions that I imposed, which mitigate the relevant risks to some extent. **I also consider that the risks must be weighed against the prospect of the applicant serving an even longer period of remand which is increasingly capable of being characterised as ‘akin to a form of preventive detention’**: *Re HA* [2021] VSCA 64, [63].”

*Re DS (a pseudonym)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Kaye JA]

[2024] VSC 823

The 14 year old applicant had been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Generalised Anxiety and Conduct Disorder, had a history of self-harm and suicide risk and at the age of 8 years had attempted to commit suicide. He was charged with home invasion, aggravated burglary person present, burglary, theft of motor vehicle, obtaining property by deception, theft and retaining stolen goods allegedly committed while subject to a probation order. He had faced difficult circumstances in custody, including being assaulted twice by other young detainees. The respondent accepted that it was open to the Court to find that exceptional circumstances existed that justified the grant of bail. However, the respondent opposed the grant of bail on the basis that, if the applicant were released on bail, there would be an unacceptable risk that he would commit a Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence and that he would endanger the safety or welfare of another person. In the course of his evidence, the applicant’s father stated that he would be prepared to give a formal undertaking to the court that if the applicant were released on bail, and if the applicant failed to abide by any of the terms of the bail, he would immediately contact the informant or (if the informant is not available) other police. At [98]-[99] Kaye JA explained why the applicant had established the requisite exceptional circumstances pursuant to s 4A of the Bail Act. At [100]-[113] his Honour discussed the “critical, and difficult, question” of unacceptable risk, ultimately finding at [114] that:

“Taking those matters into account and in particular the matters prescribed by s 3B and s 3AAA of the Bail Act, I am not satisfied that if the applicant were released on bail, risks that he would commit a Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 offence, or that he would endanger the safety and welfare of members of the community, would be unacceptable.”

Other cases in which exceptional circumstances were found and bail was granted include:

* *Douglas Victor Jensen* [2006] VSC 450 (Hollingworth J-murder).
* *Re Sleiman* [2020] VSC 469 (Lasry J-multiple charges including intentionally causing injury x 2, threat to kill, possession of prohibited weapon, false imprisonment, kidnapping, trafficking MDMA; bail subsequently revoked due to alleged offending).
* *Re Ning* [2020] VSC 609 (Lasry J-35 year old Chinese national resident in Australia since 2004 with two infant children charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of methylamphetamine in context of her involvement in a large-scale drug-trafficking syndicate).
* *Re Denaye Whitfield* [2020] VSC 632 (Taylor J-statutory murder & armed robbery).
* *Re Oldis* [2020] VSC 769 (Tinney J-23 year old charged with statutory murder & armed robbery – parity with co-accused *Whitfield* – “the hurdles in connection with causation and proof of complicity which were commented on by Taylor J applied ever more in the case of the applicant”).
* *McNamara v DPP* [2020] VSC 844 (Croucher J-59 year old Aboriginal man charged with manslaughter of a 63 year old co-resident of a rooming house – after excessive drinking session, a verbal argument erupted — deceased refused to leave applicant’s room — applicant punched deceased to face — deceased spat blood at applicant — applicant punched deceased to face again — deceased suffered fractured nose, facial bruising and heavy bleeding — after treatment and some delay, applicant called 000 — after arrival, police left deceased sitting in chair, untreated, for some time — deceased had difficulty breathing and lost consciousness — despite attempts to revive by police, fire and ambulance officers, deceased died at scene — cause of death described as “aspiration of blood complicating blunt force injuries to the face, in the setting of alcohol intoxication and hepatic cirrhosis” — *Post mortem* alcohol concentration in blood and vitreous humour of 0.47 and 0.57 g/100 mL respectively — applicant had no prior convictions for violence — fresh accommodation with friend — counselling and health services arranged — delay — deceased’s family not opposed to bail — whether there was an arguable defence relating to causation — bail granted on own undertaking, with conditions).
* *Re Kake* [2020] VSC 852 (Beale J-applicant and complainant had been in a relationship for 17 years and had 5 *children – charged with 38 offences including persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order and threatening and assaulting the complainant, causing her to suffer various injuries including bruising to her stomach, methyl and face and swelling to her knuckles – applicant on CCO at the time – complainant and 4 of the children had relocated to New Zealand).*
* *Re Wei Yu Boo* [2020] VSC 882 (Lasry J-charges including trafficking in a large commercial quantity of methylamphetamine and possession of child abuse material – applicant a low level member of drug syndicate was a Malaysian citizen on a bridging visa – potential delay of 3 years – exceptional circumstances established – unacceptable risk can be mitigated by conditions).
* *Re Brett* [2021] VSC 10 (Incerti J- unopposed application for bail by 36 year old applicant charged with a string of burglaries and associated offences whilst serving a CCO – parties consented on the application being determined ‘on the papers’).
* *Re Dinatale* [2021] VSC 104 (Tinney J-43 year old applicant with no criminal history charged witha large number of offences principally alleging family violence and intervention order breaches in respect of his wife and their 2 young children – likely period of 2-3 years on remand awaiting trial – period on remand may exceed sentence imposed if found guilty – strong family support and accommodation far away from residence of alleged victims – exceptional circumstances established – risk can be mitigated by stringent conditions so as not to be unacceptable).
* *Re Jiang* [2021] VSC 148 (Lasry J-38 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence and negligently dealing with the proceeds of crime — Potential delay of three years – Availability of residential rehabilitation — Exceptional circumstances established, his Honour saying at [60]: “A period of pre-trial custody of three years will demonstrate exceptional circumstances in almost every case.” — Unacceptable risk not demonstrated).
* *Re Spreckley* [2021] VSC 186 (Coghlan JA-applicant on multiple charges of contravening a FVIO and related charges while on bail for other indictable offences – exceptional circumstances made out primarily on the basis of “a very significant delay…[that] might well exceed any sentence that the applicant is likely to receive” – not shown to be an unacceptable risk).
* *Re Shea* [2021] VSC 207 (Incerti J-49 year old applicant, one of 3 coaccused, was facing 3 charges following an investigation into the importation of TFA-methamphetamine from Hong Kong and the subsequent disco very of a clandestine laboratory – exceptional circumstances established by a combination of circumstances including the availability of a substantial surety and a likely delay of 2 ½ to 3 years before trial – dicta of Lasry J in *Re Jiang* [2021] VSC 148 applied – any risk can be mitigated to an acceptable level with appropriate conditions of bail).
* *Re Nicholson* [2021] VSC 221 (Coghlan JA-applicant with a “not particularly significant criminal history” charged with multiple weapons, firearms, drugs and other offences while on bail for a Schedule 2 offence – applicant suffered from paraplegia, requiring the use of a wheelchair for mobility and assisted by a carer for daily tasks and a registered nurse who attends every second day to change his pressure sore bandages – exceptional circumstances made out, in particular because of the applicant’s medical condition – for this ‘last chance’ the applicant is a not unacceptable risk with imposition of appropriate conditions).
* *Turner v Lill (No 2)* [2021] VSC 255 (Croucher J –applicant bailed on dishonesty charges to Odyssey House – 3 months later applicant told police he was leaving for a new address and left before the address was approved but later handed himself in to police – applicant recommended for CISP [as to which see **subsection 9.5.17.1** below] – applicant spent 62 days on remand – maximum penalty for offence charged is three months' gaol yet five months' delay between arrest and hearing of charge - applicant's parents offered accommodation and support – bail and variation ultimately unopposed).
* *Re Hales* [2021] VSC 274 (Coghlan JA – 40 year old applicant the mother of children aged 20 & 15 charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of various drugs of dependence and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail - exceptional circumstances found based on a delay of about 2 years to trial and an inability to assess the strength and nature of the prosecution case – although a risk, not an unacceptable risk if bailed on conditions).
* *Re AJ* [2021] VSC 291 (Jane Dixon J – 35 year old applicant with lengthy criminal history charged with possess firearm and related charges – significant drug history and mental health concerns – proposed bail to residential drug rehabilitation facility – substantial surety available – significant delay until trial – bail granted on conditions but subsequently revoked without contest when AJ breached conditions of bail by possession of a drug of dependence and was consequently discharged from the drug rehabilitation facility: see [2021] VSC 395 – *Re AJ (Second bail application)* [2021] VSC 772 – proposed bail to residential drug rehabilitation facility along with substantial surety – significant delay until trial – exceptional circumstances established – not an unacceptable risk if bailed on conditions).
* *Re Bailey* [2021] VSC 299 (Lasry J-22 year old First Nations applicant charged with theft, driving whilst disqualified, committing an indictable offence on bail and other offences – availability of residential rehabilitation – exceptional circumstances established – unacceptable risk not made out).
* *Re Warda* [2021] VSC 323 (Lasry J-22 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of methylamphetamine and dealing with proceeds of crime and property suspected of being proceeds of crime – likely delay of 3 years between charge and trial – availability of residential rehabilitation – significant surety – exceptional circumstances established – unacceptable risk not made out).
* *Re DS* [2021] VSC 332 (Jane Dixon J-36 year old applicant charged with attempt to pervert the course of justice, perjury and bail offences – proposed bail to residential rehabilitation facility for treatment of methamphetamine addiction – surety available – significant delay before trial – unacceptable risk not established).
* *Re Charlton* [2021] VSC 342 (Tinney J-66 year old applicant charged with murdering his partner 14 years before – no criminal offending in interim and no attempt to flee – no relevant criminal history – relative strength of prosecution case – likely exacerbation of poor mental and physical health of applicant in custody – stable relationship and accommodation – large surety available).
* *Re Rahman* [2021] VSC 402 (Coghlan JA-19 year old applicant charged with murder and statutory murder – phone intercept evidence re involvement – on remand for 7 months – “very powerful family support” including offer (apparently not taken up) of a surety in the full amount of the equity in the family home – delay until mid-2022 before trial – co-accused still in custody – applicant admitted into tertiary education course – new facts and circumstances shown – exceptional circumstances made out – not an unacceptable risk).
* *Re Stratton* [2021] VSC 415 (Champion J-53 year old applicant charged with murdering his 81 year old father by a fatal gunshot wound to the head – deceased was suffering from aggressive bowel cancer which was regarded as terminal, his health was declining and he was experiencing increased pain – he had sought avenues for voluntary assisted dying – respondent accepts it would be open to find exceptional circumstances and does not allege unacceptable risk – bail granted).
* *Re Bradley* [2021] VSC 431 (Coghlan JA-33 year old applicant with significant prior criminal history charged with attempted murder, reckless conduct endangering life, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, intentionally causing injury, aggravated assault, committing an indictable offence while on bail (four charges) and intentionally causing serious injury – the complainant was his partner of 10 years from whom he was separated – at the time of the alleged offending the applicant was on bail and summons in 4 outstanding matters, largely driving offences – case for attempted murder “extremely weak” and there is “an inference open that the injuries were inflicted by the applicant but the precise circumstances are very hard to discern – exceptional circumstances made out – notwithstanding a number of phone calls from prison, applicant not an unacceptable risk – bail granted).
* *Re Windley* [2021] VSC 432 (Coghlan JA-Aboriginal applicant with significant prior criminal history charged with sexual assault (x2), unlawful assault (x2), persistent contravention of a FVIO and contravention of FVIO x 9 – the complainant was his former partner – exceptional circumstances made out almost entirely because of the evidence of his aunt with whom the applicant would live in Wentworth, “significantly removed from any area where the complainant will be, with very few means of being able to get anywhere near her” – not an unacceptable risk – bail granted).
* *Re Kudric* [2021] VSC 442 (Champion J-25 year old applicant charged with contravening a family violence intervention order x 6, persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order, recklessly causing injury, intentionally damaging property, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, two charges of contravening a conduct condition of bail, possessing a controlled weapon – complainant was applicant’s ex-partner – applicant on bail in another matter at the time of alleged offending – exceptional circumstances satisfied – unacceptable risk not found – bail granted on conditions including judicial monitoring).
* *Re Hooper (No.2)* [2021] VSC 476 – for details and extracts from the judgment of Tinney J see 9.4.11 below.
* *Re Hamilton-Green* [2021] VSC 484 (Champion J-38 year old applicant with 7 year old son charged with trafficking a drug of dependence in not less than a commercial quantity, trafficking in a drug of dependence, possessing a drug of dependence, dealing with the proceeds of crime and committing an indictable offence while on bail – applicant on bail for other charges at the time of the alleged offending – residential rehabilitation program available at Windana – bail granted on conditions, including that applicant attend the proposed residential rehabilitation program).
* *Re Hammoud* [2021] VSC 496 (Coghlan JA-22 year old applicant charged with murder – exceptional circumstances made out by a combination of family support, availability of a surety, his recent diagnosis of a major depressive disorder, the availability of treatment for that disorder, delay in the general sense of being in custody for more than 1 year before his trial is likely to commence and various COVID-19 restrictions in detention – risk to witnesses not unacceptable given undertaking by applicant’s brother to supervise the applicant on bail and to make sure that his firearms are transferred to other premises). Bail revoked by Tinney J 06/10/2022: [2022] VSC 613.
* *Re Rizakis* [2021] VSC 550 (Lasry J-58 year old applicant charged with intimidating a person involved in a criminal proceeding, harassing a witness, unlawful assault and contravening a conduct condition of bail — limited prior criminal history — impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people in custody — “if the applicant were not granted bail, it is likely that the period of pre-sentence detention he would serve prior to the matter finalising would exceed any term of imprisonment to which he would be sentenced upon a finding of guilt…this is itself capable of amounting to exceptional circumstances” – exceptional circumstances established — unacceptable risk not demonstrated).
* *Re Niyazi* [2021] VSC 556 (Coghlan JA- 41 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of cannabis and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – delay – no unacceptable risk).
* *Re Tafa* [2021] VSC 557 (Coghlan JA- this young adult applicant was the last of 11 young persons, 9 of whom were children, charged with violent disorder, affray and subsequently with murder of a 15 year old boy who was stabbed once in the chest during a fight involving the 11 offenders in June 2020 – Coghlan JA had refused T Tafa bail in February 2021 being particularly concerned about whether the applicant would have a proper employment opportunity available to him because his Honour regarded that as being integral to the possibility of him being prevented from reoffending – exceptional circumstances constituted by delay and his Honour’s view of the strength of the Crown case – risk of reoffending made acceptable by imposition of 16 conditions).
* *Re* *Kuol* [2021] VSC 598 (Lasry J-23 year old applicant charged with attempted robbery, attempted theft, resist police, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, contravening a conduct condition of bail and property damage — likely that pre-sentence detention would exceed any custodial sentence imposed — no prior criminal history — appropriateness of proposed bail address — exceptional circumstances established — unacceptable risk not demonstrated — bail granted with conditions).
* *Re LM* [2021] VSC 623 (Jane Dixon J-46 year old applicant with mental health issues who may not be fit to stand trial charged with using carriage service to menace, threats to cause serious injury and other charges – already on bail for other charges – exceptional circumstances constituted by combination of LM’s mental and physical health issues, availability of treatment in the community and delay – satisfied that the conditions of bail, which are agreed between the parties, will ameliorate any risk to an acceptable level).
* *Re DM* [2021] VSC 631 (Lasry J-43 year old applicant charged with trafficking a drug of dependence and associated offences allegedly occurring while on bail for other matters — prospective treatment and bail support services — potential for time remanded in custody to exceed sentence if bail not granted — $10,000 surety and appropriately robust conditions of bail, including a judicial monitoring condition, sufficiently reduce the risk to an acceptable level).
* *Re Villani* [2021] VSC 638 (Tinney J-23 year old applicant with drug problem and significant criminal history charged with two alleged sprees of dishonest drug-related offending, the second occurring while on bail for the first – availability of residential drug treatment place at Odyssey House – strong family support with surety available – COVID-19 factors – exceptional circumstances established – no unacceptable risk).
* *Re Bolvan* [2021] VSC 664 (Niall JA-50 year old applicant with no prior criminal history charged with trafficking in a drug of dependence in not less than a commercial quantity, trafficking in a drug of dependence (six counts) and associated charges – combination of delay, the conditions of incarceration and the fact that the quantity of drugs involved is uncertain and may well not exceed the commercial quantity comprise exceptional circumstances – no unacceptable risk – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re El Ali* [2021] VSC 713 (Niall JA-41 year old applicant charged with possessing documents for trafficking in a drug of dependence, negligently dealing with proceeds of crime, possessing a firearm related item despite being subject to a firearm prohibition order and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail on a charge of trafficking in not less than a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence – exceptional circumstances established by strong family support & delay – surety available – no unacceptable risk – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Sidi* [2021] VSC 759 (Lasry J-21 year old applicant with significant criminal history charged with armed robbery x 4, recklessly causing injury, assault, obtaining financial advantage and property by deception and possessing cannabis while on parole and on bail for other matters – exceptional circumstances found by reason of likely delay of up to 3 years – at [62] his Honour said: “The risk of releasing the applicant on bail, having regard to the circumstances of this case, is not such that the Court can condone a three-year period of remand for a 21-year old before the matters with which they are charged are dealt with.”).
* *Re Scott* [2021] VSC 818 (T Forrest J-30 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, possession of a small quantity of methylamphetamine, possession of a small quantity of cannabis, possession of crossbow without exemption, possession of ammunition without licence and knowingly dealing with proceeds of crime ($73,850) – trafficking charge to be withdrawn – exceptional circumstances finding not opposed – applicant does not present an unacceptable risk of reoffending or not complying with conditions of bail).
* *Re Andrew* [2022] VSC 46 (Kaye JA-18 year old applicant charged with aggravated home invasion and theft of a motor vehicle – first time in adult custody – stable home environment and employment – exceptional circumstances found based in particular on the applicant’s youth, vulnerability in an adult prison, limited previous convictions, limited role in the offending, the delay and the recommendations of the Youth Justice Bail Service – not an unacceptable risk if applicant released on bail with conditions).
* *Re ML* [2022] VSC 76 (Jane Dixon J-48 year old applicant of Aboriginal descent charged with family violence and related offences – long history of drug addiction – exceptional circumstances made out by the proposal for the applicant to enter the proposed culturally appropriate residential rehabilitation facility coupled with the intervention of structured mental health support – not an unacceptable risk if conditions of bail are fixed which include his entry into the Galiamble facility and otherwise restrict his movements whilst on bail).
* *Re Mirukaj* [2022] VSC 82 (Champion J-applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of cannabis and of cocaine and related offences – exceptional circumstances made out on issues including likely delay {[75]-[78]} and parity with a coaccused {[89]-[91]} – not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with conditions).
* *Re Jackson* [2022] VSC 101 (Lasry J-50 year old applicant charged with murder on a complicity basis – “there is no evidence at all that would support the basis on which the count of murder is levelled against the applicant” – onerous custodial conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic – no unacceptable risk if released on bail with conditions including a surety of $10,000).
* *Re BLC* [2022] VSC 128 (Jane Dixon J-49 year old applicant charged with manslaughter – on CCO at time of alleged offending and with lengthy prior criminal history – exceptional circumstances made out on circumstances including delay, vulnerability in custody due to epilepsy, support of his mother and supervision and support of CISP – not an unacceptable risk).
* *Re Hong Hoang* [2022] VSC 135 (Champion J-28 year old female Vietnamese applicant in Australia on a temporary working visa charged with cultivating and trafficking in a large commercial quantity of cannabis – exceptional circumstances established by circumstances including significant delay caused by the pandemic, the onerous conditions of remand custody and the availability of a significant surety – risk not unacceptable if released on bail with conditions).
* *Re DD* [2022] VSC 176 (Jane Dixon J-32 year old applicantwith a relevant criminal history charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of methamphetamine – exceptional circumstances established by a combination of delay to trial, conditions on remand due to the pandemic, the structured drug rehabilitation support available to him, the close relationship he has with his ailing mother and the seriousness of her health condition as described by her doctor and the strong family support from parents and siblings, the substantial surety, the support of his new partner, the prospect of a stable address and possible suitable employment and importantly, the applicant’s own evidence in support of bail in which he professed a firm motivation to rehabilitate himself and abide by the strict bail conditions proposed – not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with strict conditions).
* *Re Kerbage* [2022] VSC 179 (Champion J-47 year old applicant with a lengthy and relevant criminal history charged with trafficking & possessing drugs of dependence, possessing a prohibited weapon and breach of bail – availability of treatment and bail support services – exceptional circumstances found comprising delay and the opportunity for the applicant to complete a 16 week rehabilitation course – risk not unacceptable with a surety and conditions including residence at The Cottage).
* *Re Ahmar-Smith* [2022] VSC 204 (Niall JA-24 year old applicant charged with being a prohibited person possessing a firearm, unlicensed person failing to store a firearm in a secure manner, possessing cartridge ammunition without a licence and committing an indictable offence while on bail – exceptional circumstances found based on a combination of matters: (1) a risk that time spent on remand would exceed any sentence likely to be imposed; (2) the possibility that had the applicant been convicted of the charges he is currently contesting the total sentence for other offending imposed in March 2022 may not have been very different; (3) appropriate accommodation in a self-contained bungalow at the rear of his uncle’s premises; (4) family support; and (5) the applicant is currently subject to a CCO which contains therapeutic and other conditions which ought not be further disrupted by an ongoing period of incarceration – no unacceptable risk if released on bail with strict conditions).
* *Re Kuron* [2022] VSC 236 (Taylor J-27 year old Sudanese-born applicant charged with aggravated burglary, contravention of a Family Violence Intervention Order, commission of an indictable offence whilst on bail, theft, unlawful assault and contravention of a bail conduct condition – exceptional circumstances found comprising: (1) the prosecution case with respect to aggravated burglary is very weak; (2) the applicant has no criminal history; (3) as a consequence of COVID-19 the conditions of custody are more onerous than formerly, the applicant spending much of the remand period in the psychiatric unit at the Melbourne Assessment Prison; (4) there is a danger that the period of remand would exceed the length of any likely sentence and a CCO is not outside the range of possible sentences; (5) the applicant has the opportunity to live with his aunt and cousin; (6) the applicant has the opportunity to resume work as a model; (7) the applicant is recommended by the CISP Remand Outreach Program for community referral – risk not unacceptable if released on bail subject to strict conditions).
* *Re Ann-Marie Troselj* [2022] VSC 241 (Fox J-52 year old applicant with significant prior criminal history and already on remand for just over 1 year charged with aggravated burglary and false imprisonment – exceptional circumstances found comprising delay, potential loss of housing if not granted bail, the onerous conditions in custody resulting from the pandemic and the recent grant of significant NDIS funding – risk not unacceptable if released on bail subject to strict conditions).
* *Re Cowley* [2022] VSC 304 (Taylor J-28 year old applicant with no prior criminal history charged with assault, threat to damage property, use carriage service to menace or offend, bail offences and drive whilst disqualified – complainant the on/off partner of the applicant – applicant has outstanding criminal allegations including of family violence – exceptional circumstances found comprising “the confluence of the strength of the prosecution case, likely sentence in the event of a finding of guilt and delay” – CCO the most likely sentencing outcome in the event of a finding of guilt – “the undoubted risks posed by the applicant can be sufficiently ameliorated by the imposition of stringent bail conditions”).
* *Re Booth* [2022] VSC 419 (Niall JA-37 year old applicant with relevant criminal history charged with trafficking cannabis and methylamphetamine, false imprisonment, possession of cannabis and methylamphetamine, unlicensed driving, commit indictable offence on bail, retain stolen goods and resist police – exceptional circumstances found on a combination of circumstances, “the availability of residential treatment [being] especially important” – bail granted “subject to some very strict conditions, the most salient of which are conditions that the applicant reside at a residential drug treatment program and engage in treatment for his drug addiction that has been an underlying and significant cause of his past offending”).
* *Re Trakci* [2022] VSC 530 (Niall JA-34 year old applicant with extensive and concerning criminal history charged with trafficking drug of dependence, possessing drug of dependence, possessing prohibited weapon, being a prohibited person in possession of an imitation firearm, dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime, handling stolen goods and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – although “the matter is finely balanced”, exceptional circumstances made out through a combination of factors including the likely delay in the matter proceeding to trial, the proposed surety of the applicant’s uncle and of particular importance the proposed residential rehabilitation at the Cottage).
* *Re Dole* [2022] VSC 560 (Fox J-40 year old applicant charged with Schedule 2 offences (theft of motor vehicle, negligently deal with proceeds of crime, commit indictable offence while on bail and possess drug of dependence) while on summons for Schedule 2 offences – alleged offending at lower end of range of seriousness – delay – likelihood that time on remand would exceed length of any sentence – exceptional circumstances established – rick not unacceptable if granted bail on conditions).
* *Re LW* [2022] VSC 567 (Fox J-18 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with robbery, unlawful assault, assault in company, assault by kicking, assault with a weapon and theft-at the time of the alleged offending he was serving a youth supervision order (YSO)-Fox J held that the applicant was required to show exceptional circumstances pursuant to s.4AA(2)(c)(v) of the **BA** (see **section 9.2.5/6**)-exceptional circumstances made out by a combination of reasons-applicant not an unacceptable risk of committing further offences whilst on bail or endangering the safety and welfare of any person if granted bail with conditions).
* *Re Swanson* [2022] VSC 619 (Croucher J-26 year old applicant charged with *inter alia* trafficking (*simpliciter*) in 1,4 butanediol, possession of controlled weapon and breaching bail conditions — alleged offences committed while on bail for charge of failing to appear on other charges — support of CISP available to applicant who had a history of failing to report on bail, a history of illicit drug use and a modest criminal history – weak prosecution case on trafficking – if all charges proved, any custodial sentences likely to exceed period spent in custody if not bailed – exceptional circumstances conceded by the respondent – not an unacceptable risk if bailed on conditions).
* *Re SP* [2022] VSC 626 (Jane Dixon J-29 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with traffick methamphetamine (commercial quantity or alternatively traffickable quantity) – applicant has mental health issues including a relatively recent suicide attempt – partner shortly to give birth – couple experienced loss of previous baby in 2021 – exceptional circumstances made out by a combination of factors including-
* uncertainty as to whether prosecution will be unable to establish trafficking at a commercial level;
* delay of years rather than months;
* not an extensive prior criminal history and first time remanded in a prison;
* consideration in s.3A Bail Act apply to applicant as an Aboriginal person;
* applicant’s family circumstances, including good family support from his partner and extended family and a stable residence to return to;
* applicant suffering increased levels of depression and anxiety in custody and appears to be in need of a greater level of treatment than has been provided to him;
* applicant has employment available with a very supportive employer; and
* applicant has CISP support and has demonstrated a past capacity to engage well with mental health, AOD and community-based justice support.

The applicant is not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with appropriate conditions).

* *Re Ryan* [2022] VSC 663 (Kaye JA-54 year old applicant with no previous criminal history had been charged with and bailed on 20/05/2022 on a number of offences including sexual penetration of a child RI allegedly committed between 2015 & 2018 – applicant was subsequently charged on 22/06/2022 with contravention of a family violence intervention order, attempting to pervert the course of justice and contravention of a conduct condition of bail arising from a series of telephone calls that took place between RI and the applicant on 07/06/2022 – bail not opposed – exceptional circumstances made out on a combination of factors including-
* stable residence well away from where the alleged offending occurred;
* significant family support especially from his son and if released on bail would be able to provide his son with assistance in looking after their 3 year old child who has congenital liver disease;
* likely to be substantial pre-trial delay;
* applicant had been held in protective custody since his remand, personal visits have been suspended and he has had restricted access to his legal advisors and difficulty accessing the hand-up brief

Further, each of the 11 contacts relied on by the respondent for the breach of bail were instigated by RI herself and not by the applicant and these converted the applicant’s position to one which required him to establish the existence of exceptional circumstances – “that consideration alone, of itself, is sufficient to constitute the requisite exceptional circumstances” – unacceptable risk not demonstrated – bail granted with conditions and a surety of $5,000).

* *Re Xian* [2022] VSC 492 (Champion J-19 year old applicant charged with aggravated home invasion, criminal damage and attempted aggravated home invasion – considerable delay – no criminal history, supportive family and strong protective factors – youth justice supervision – exceptional circumstances conceded by informant – risk not unacceptable with conditions).
* *Re ZP* [2022] VSC 585 (Champion J-24 year old applicant charged with burglary and handling stolen goods – at the time of the alleged offending the applicant was serving a CCO – applicant had a limited criminal history an a special vulnerability due to her mental health – onerous conditions in custody as a consequence of COVID-19 – exceptional circumstances made out by the combination of circumstances discussed at [52]-[66] – risk not unacceptable with conditions).
* *Re Smith-Goode* [2022] VSC 798 (Kaye JA-22 year old applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering life, recklessly causing injury, contravening Family Violence Intervention Order, stalking, making threat to kill, and committing indictable offence while on bail – applicant of Aboriginal descent and had a disadvantaged and dysfunctional upbringing – delay and difficult circumstances in custody during COVID-19 pandemic – suitable programs available for applicant if on bail – respondent did not oppose a finding that exceptional circumstances existed – taking into account the availability of the CISP & VACCA programs, the respondent had not established that, if the applicant were released on bail subject to appropriate conditions, the risk of the applicant reoffending was not unacceptable).
* *Re Warren* [2023] VSC 98 (Niall JA-31 year old applicant charged with 2 sets of charges involving 20 dishonesty offences – respondent did not oppose a finding that exceptional circumstances existed – risk of committing an offence can be moderated by conditions).
* *Re Pollard* [2023] VSC 106 (Fox J-33 year old applicant with a history of drug dependence and limited family support charged with 15 charges including trafficking in a drug of dependence, resist arrest, assault police, intentionally cause injury, recklessly cause injury and common law assault, albeit “not a serious example of any of the matters the subject of the police charges” – applicant also charged with breaching a supervision order as a result of the police charges – applicant’s criminal history commenced in the Children’s Court in 2005 when he was 15 years old – he was dealt with for a range of offending, including violence, dishonesty, drug possession, property damage, bail and driving-related matters – in 2010 and 2011, he received terms of imprisonment for offences including recklessly cause serious injury, intentionally cause injury and affray – on 16 September 2012, he was remanded on the index offence, and since then he has largely remained either in custody, undergoing treatment at Rivergum or otherwise subject to a supervision order – since the commencement of the supervision order in December 2018 he has been sentenced in relation to 13 breaches of that order, and various other offences, including using a drug of dependence, possessing a controlled weapon, theft, wilful damage and committing indictable offences whilst on bail – likely delay leading to a real prospect that applicant’s time on remand will exceed any ultimate sentence – exceptional circumstances established – relevance of delay to unacceptable risk – applicant the subject of an interim supervision order to commence immediately upon his release from custody – applicant not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with strict conditions).
* *Re Murray* [2023] VSC 266 (Niall JA-18 year old Aboriginal applicant with a “relatively modest” Children’s Court criminal history had been charged with 8 sets of offences comprising 52 charges:

(a) Contravene family violence interim intervention order (14 charges);

(b) Contravene bail conduct conditions (6 charges);

(c) Persistent contravention of family violence intervention order (8 charges);

(d) Commit an indictable offence whilst on bail (10 charges);

(e) Contravene family violence final intervention order (12 charges);

(f) Aggravated burglary;

(g) Theft.

At the time of the alleged offending on one set of charges laid by informant Phillips, the applicant was subject to bail on the other 7 sets of charges and that bail had not been revoked. Niall JA was satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist: “There is a real risk that the time on remand would be longer than any sentence that might be imposed in the event that the applicant is convicted of the Phillips offences.” Although his Honour “was unable to be satisfied that a release on bail presents no risk of offending”, he was “comfortably satisfied that it is not an unacceptable risk, that the risks are being managed by supports including most importantly a stable residence”.

* *Re Prider* [2023] VSC 294 (Champion J-34 year old applicant with extensive criminal history facing multiple charges relating to stolen goods, theft, burglary and possessing drugs of dependence allegedly committed while serving a Drug & Alcohol Treatment Order – criminality linked to methamphetamine use disorder – poor history of bail compliance – residential drug rehabilitation program available at Odyssey House – exceptional circumstances test satisfied – risk can be managed by residential rehabilitation program – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Bray* [2023] VSC 371 (Incerti J-50 year old applicant with established diagnosis of schizophrenia charged with attempted murder and other serious offences allegedly committed in the applicant’s home during a police accompanied home visit by the Community Mental Health Team – prior non-compliance with medication and mental health treatment – applicant had no criminal history, had strong family support, had been on remand for almost 7 months and it was his first time in custody – exceptional circumstances shown on the basis that if the applicant is not bailed now his period in custody will exceed any prison sentence imposed if the mental impairment defence is available to him – unacceptable risk not established – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Laverick* [2023] VSC 303 (Champion J-heavily pregnant applicant with a history of drug use facing 62 charges relating to stolen goods, possessing drugs of dependence, possessing ammunition and prohibited weapons, possessing firearms, trafficking drugs of dependence and dealing with proceeds of crime – the co-accused is the partner of the applicant – unborn child at risk of being removed from the applicant in custody – exceptional circumstances test “somewhat reluctantly… met” by a multitude of factors considered together, particularly “the supports available, her pregnancy and the lengthy delays that may occur before her matters are finalised” – unacceptable risk not found – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Johnson* [2023] VSC 333 (Champion J–71 year old applicant charged with murder – he was a former police officer, had health issues and was the subject of onerous conditions in custody – weak prosecution case – exceptional circumstances satisfied – risk of obstructing the course of justice and interfering with witnesses can be managed by a GPS monitoring device and strict conditions – bail granted).
* *Re De Stefanis* [2023] VSC 513 (Croucher J–56 year old applicant with paranoid schizophrenia charged with stalking, threat to kill, threat to inflict serious injury, breaching personal safety intervention order [‘PSIO’] and using phone to menace by making threatening phone calls to receptionist at area mental health service attended by applicant — applicant on summons for multiple charges of threats to employees of same service 12 to 18 months earlier — applicant may have been psychotic at time of some or all alleged offences — possible defence of mental impairment — PSIOs now in place for workers allegedly threatened — nearly three months in custody since arrest — limited criminal history — applicant usually on community treatment order when in community and taking depot injections voluntarily in custody — if found guilty, applicant very unlikely to be imprisoned at all or any further — accommodation available and support worker willing to assist — exceptional circumstances established — asserted risks not unacceptable — bail granted on own undertaking with conditions — released on inpatient assessment order under *Mental Health Act 2014*).
* *Re Carr* [2023] VSC 564 (Kaye JA–27 year old Aboriginal woman charged with multiple offences including handle stolen goods, theft, driving while disqualified and committing indictable offence while on bail – Need for applicant to attend to Sorry Business – Difficult health issues in custody – Separation from young children – exceptional circumstances established – not an unacceptable risk of re-offending and endangering public safety for the reasons set out at [65]-[[79] and summarised at [79] as follows: “the combined effect of the availability to the applicant of stable accommodation and of assistance from the Law and Advocacy Centre for Women, together with the exceptional circumstances relating to the applicant’s health, children and recent [death of her brother], are sufficient to render any such risk to be not unacceptable in all the circumstances of the case” – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Njovu* [2023] VSC 622 (Champion J–42 year old applicant charged with failure to answer bail, criminal damage, intentionally causing injury, unlawful assault and contravening a Family Violence Intervention Order – first time in custody – family support – Men’s Behavioural Change program – delay – exceptional circumstances established – ties to the jurisdiction – no recent contact with the complainant – respondent has not shown there is an unacceptable risk that cannot be moderated by bail conditions).
* *Re Wetzler* [2023] VSC 626 (Champion J–65 year old applicant charged with murder of then fiancée in 1984 – no criminal history – cold case, investigation reopened – weak prosecution case – delay – exceptional circumstances established – prosecution did not submit applicant posed an unacceptable risk – bail granted).
* *Re Morrison* [2023] VSC 643 (Champion J–29 year old applicant charged with abduction or detention for a sexual purpose, administration of an intoxicating substance for a sexual purpose, grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16, sexual assault of a child under the age of 16 — criminal history related to driving offences, possession of weapons and drugs — applicant subject to Community Correction Order — complex health issues — Intervention Orders in force — delay — exceptional circumstances established — unacceptable risk not shown — bail granted).
* *Re SS* [2023] VSC 712 (Croucher J–44 year old applicant charged with using methylamphetamine, breaching condition of supervision order, offending while on bail, and resisting arrest — 5 police officers went to applicant’s home to arrest him for breaching supervision order by using methylamphetamine — applicant resisted physically when, while bleeding from the nose, he was not allowed by police to take unknown tablet — applicant indicates plea of guilty to resisting arrest but not guilty to charges based on use of methylamphetamine — applicant on bail for charge of breaching condition of supervision order — extensive criminal history — applicant in custody for over a month since arrest — short delay until potential guilty plea on resist charges, but significant delay until contested hearing on charges based on use of methylamphetamine — delay until final resolution of charges likely to exceed length of total prison sentence, if convicted — exceptional circumstances established — strictures of supervision order reduce risk of offending so as not be unacceptable — bail granted on own undertaking with condition to comply with supervision order).
* *Re SS* [2024] VSC 225 (Croucher J-Charges of contravening condition of supervision order, threats to kill, intimidation of person who may become involved in criminal investigation, using threatening words, unlawful assault (by words), offending on bail — allegation that SS failed to submit to urinalysis in breach of supervision order, thereby also breaching condition of bail — alleged that, six days later, SS again failed to submit to urinalysis in breach of supervision order, threatened to kill employee of Dorevitch, and her husband, and thereby breached bail again — SS on bail for charges including breach of supervision order — extensive criminal history, including for violence — SS in custody for seven weeks since arrest — charges of threat to kill and intimidation to be heard as summary contest in Magistrates’ Court before related charges of breaching supervision order etc to be heard summarily in Supreme Court — final hearing in Magistrates’ Court not before end of year, and hearing in Supreme Court necessarily later still – delay until finalisation of charges likely to exceed non-parole period if convicted – exceptional circumstances established – strictures of supervision order reduce risk of offending on bail so as not to be unacceptable – bail granted on own undertaking).
* *Re Jeffkins* [2023] VSC 733 (Kaye JA–29 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with recklessly causing injury, assault and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – alleged offending occurred while applicant was on bail for an indictable offence and subject to a Community Correction Order in respect of another indictable offence – applicant had a substantial criminal history including previous breaches of bail, had significant mental health issues and was subject to an Inpatient Assessment Order made under the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022* – exceptional circumstances made out by combination of circumstances, including: the applicant’s serious mental health issues, his referral to hospital, the support available from the Neighbourhood Justice Centre, the family support and stable accommodation available to the applicant and the applicant’s Aboriginal heritage together with the recently made Inpatient Assessment Order – unacceptable risk not shown if released on bail subject to conditions).
* *Re Espagne* [2023] VSC 746 (Niall JA–23 year old applicant charged with cultivating a narcotic plant; two charges of trafficking in a drug of dependence; two charges of possessing a drug of dependence; dealing with the proceeds of crime; committing an indictable offence while on bail; contravening certain conduct conditions of bail; and failure to comply with an order to access data storage – at time of alleged offences applicant was on bail for one charge of theft, on summons for driving offences and serving two CCOs for a range of offences including trafficking a drug of dependence; contravening certain conduct conditions of bail; and committing an indictable offence while on bail – applicant had been on remand for 7 weeks – he had some family support, he and his partner are expecting a child in the next few months and he “has given some recognition of the importance of abstinence from drugs if he is to remain out of prison and be able to look after his partner and child” – exceptional circumstances established – not an unacceptable risk if bailed on appropriate conditions).
* *Re Pelle-Lopeti* [2023] VSC 776 (Champion J-18 year old applicant with 2 sets of charges relating to aggravated home invasion, recklessly cause injury and robbery – no criminal history but 2 prior diversions – family and Youth Justice support – exceptional circumstances satisfied – unacceptable risk not established – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re WD (No 1)* [2023] VSC 780 (Elliott J-12 year old applicant charged with murder – applicant had been in DFFH’s care for a significant period – she has been described as an “exceptionally vulnerable young person” with “extremely complex protection and care needs” and has been diagnosed with several mental health and cognitive functioning disorders – her intellectual capacity has been estimated as equivalent to that of a 6-year-old with respect to both her maturity and her level of comprehension – the DPP properly accepted that “the evidence overwhelmingly demonstrated that [exceptional] circumstances existed” – the real issue was whether or not there was an unacceptable risk that, if released on bail, WD would endanger the safety or welfare of any person – ultimately bail was granted on the condition that WD reside at a Secure Location which was staffed 24 hours a day – while residing there WD would have access to therapeutic support, including medical and other assistance – for further details see **section 9.5.8** below).
* *Re Guerra* [2023] VSC 795 (Champion J-19 year old applicant facing a large number of charges relating to burglary and theft – applicant vulnerable in custody due to his age and impaired intellectual functioning and the fact that he presents as immature – respondent conceded that it was open to the court to find that exceptional circumstances exist but submitted that the applicant posed an unacceptable risk – increased delay as applicant is charged with multiple offences spanning multiple jurisdictions – exceptional circumstances satisfied – risk can be reduced through strict bail conditions – bail granted).
* *Re Chok* [2024] VSC 33 (Elliott J-39 year old applicant charged with 6 drug offences including trafficking and possessing a large commercial quantity of a drug of dependence (1,4-butanediol) – applicant had a prior conviction for drug trafficking in which his partner was also involved – in relation to the more serious charges the case against the applicant “could not properly be described as strong” – availability of stable accommodation and treatment and support services – applicant especially vulnerable in custody due to his HIV+ status – likely of delay of around 2 years before trial – exceptional circumstances exist justifying the grant of bail and the prosecution had not established unacceptable risk – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Kellie Boland* [2024] VSC 85 (Fox J-47 year old applicant with a limited criminal history, a victim of prior family violence and a history of alcoholism, homelessness and untreated mental health issues, charged with resist an emergency worker on duty, fail to answer bail, criminal damage and contravene a CCO while on a CCO imposed for offences of fail to answer bail (a Schedule 2 offence) – respondent conceded exceptional circumstances but asserted applicant an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail – availability of supports – risk of applicant failing to answer bail not unacceptable – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Tiburcy* [2024] VSC 163 (Fox J-46 year old applicant charged with 5 counts of trafficking in a large commercial quantity of a drug of dependence – 4 of the charges related to MDMA, cocaine, methylamphetamine & ketamine and the 5th was unspecified – very significant delay constituting exceptional circumstances – with appropriate conditions applicant not an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person by further offending and/or failing to answer bail – applicant released on bail with strict conditions including electronic monitoring by BailSafe).
* *Re Taylor* [2024] VSC 233 (Fox J- 54 year old applicant charged with 1x trafficking in a commercial quantity of drugs of dependence, 9x trafficking in a drug of dependence (6 of these charges do not disclose an offence known to law) and 18x dealing with proceeds of crime – applicant is the owner and director of Melbourne Sports Medicine & Anti-Aging Clinic and it is alleged that he used the Clinic as a front to sell a variety of prescription drugs, specifically drugs commonly misused for bodybuilding purposes, without the requisite authority or licence to possess or traffick those drugs – relevant criminal history: *Taylor v The Queen* [2020] VSCA 50 – exceptional circumstances established based on (1) anticipated delay of at least 2 years pending trial; (2) 6 of the 9 trafficking simpliciter charges are fatally flawed; (3) prosecution case on charge 1 appears quite weak insofar as a commercial quantity must be proved; (4) the availability of a bail guarantor – applicant is not an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person by further offending and/or failing to answer bail if granted bail on strict conditions).
* *Re Al-Mandalawy* [2024] VSC 298 (Hollingworth J-while on 2 separate counts of bail the 31 year old applicant was charged with 13 charges, including trafficking in a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence (2.75kg of 1,4 Butanediol) and possession of a traffickable quantity of firearms – applicant who had a relevant history of weapons and drug-related offending had been on remand for over 6 months – the applicant submitted that exceptional circumstances were demonstrated by: (a) his personal circumstances, home environment and background; (b) family support and ties to the jurisdiction; (c) the availability of a $100,000 surety; (d) the availability of therapeutic drug treatment in the community; (e) the strength of the prosecution case; and (f) delay – holding that this was “very much a borderline case”, her Honour said at [59]-[60]: “Many of the matters relied upon by the applicant are certainly not exceptional in themselves. However, when those matters are considered in combination with the availability of residential drug treatment (to address a longstanding problem, which contributes to the applicant’s ongoing offending), and the possible delay until trial, I was satisfied that exceptional circumstances were made out. The strict conditions [including a surety] that I am going to impose should be sufficient to make any risk of further offending, that might endanger the safety or welfare of any person, an acceptable risk.”).
* *Re Nasic* [2024] VSC 324 (Champion J-42 year old applicant with a lengthy criminal history charged with contravening personal safety intervention orders, drug possession, assaulting an emergency worker and dealing with the proceeds of crime – exceptional circumstances found by a combination of delay, the special vulnerability of the applicant and the support of CISP and other organisations – risk of committing further offences whilst on bail and of failing to answer bail can be managed by strict conditions – unacceptable risk not established).
* *Re Mullin* [2024] VSC 407 (Kaye JA-27 year old applicant with “a quite extensive criminal history that commenced in 2022” charged with 7 sets of offences detailed at [2]-[28] including a Schedule 2 offence while subject to a community correction order for Schedule 2 offences – abuse of crystal methylamphetamine – exceptional circumstances made out for 4 specific reasons in combination set out at [65]-[73] & [78], the principal one of which is the availability of residential therapeutic treatment at Windana – notwithstanding the Windana program and the support of his father there is a risk that he might relapse into further offending but that risk is not unacceptable – bail granted).
* *Re Thorpe* [2024] VSC 414 (Elliott J- 23 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with attempted armed robbery and assault while on bail for aggravated burglary, sexual assault, carrying a controlled weapon and possession of cannabis – applicant struggles with mental health and alcohol dependence – he has no criminal history and no other outstanding charges but has failed to comply with some conditions on his earlier grant of bail – stable accommodation, family support and availability of culturally appropriate supports and treatment – exceptional circumstances made out for reasons set out at [72]-[85] – risk ameliorated through strict conditions as discussed at [86]-[93] – bail granted on 16 conditions detailed at [95]). See also **section 9.4.11** below.
* *Re Ngo* [2024] VSC 474 (Champion J-29 year old applicant with no criminal history who was heavily pregnant and experiencing health complications was facing a single charge of cultivating a narcotic plant in not less than a large commercial quantity — married to co-accused — surety — strength of prosecution case — delay — non-English speaking background — exceptional circumstances made out — unacceptable risk not found — bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Lesslie* [2024] VSC 568 (Kaye JA–32 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with burglary, theft of motor vehicle, driving a motor vehicle recklessly exposing an emergency worker to a risk of safety, recklessly driving a motor vehicle, causing damage to an emergency service vehicle while the subject of a community corrections order, theft of bankcards, possessing cartridge ammunition whilst not the holder of a licence or permit, possessing prohibited weapon without exemption and driving motor vehicle during a period of disqualification – applicant has a substantial list of previous convictions dating back to 2016 – applicant suffering “quite serious health issues” detailed at [45]-[46] – exceptional circumstances made out for the reasons detailed at [79]-[81] including that the applicant had already spent 457 days on remand – unacceptable risk not found for the reasons set out at [83]-[95] – bail granted with conditions including compliance with CISP requirements). Bail was subsequently revoked on the basis that the applicant was not residing at the fixed address and was alleged to have driven a stolen vehicle while affected by drugs contrary to conditions of bail: *Re Lesslie (No 2)* [2024] VSC 613).
* *Re Thickens* [2024] VSC 743 (Fox J–24 year old applicant charged with multiple offences including aggravated carjacking, a Schedule 1 offence — applicant subject to a drug treatment order at time of alleged offending — prior criminal history — availability of residential rehabilitation — exceptional circumstances established — unacceptable risk not established — bail granted with conditions including a residential drug treatment condition).
* *Re KM* [2024] VSC 802 (Incerti J–40 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with a number of offences alleged to have occurred between 1 February 2021 and 4 July 2024, including: (a) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Cannabis, in a quantity that it not less than a commercial quantity; (b) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Amphetamine, in a quantity that it not less than a commercial quantity; and (c) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Methylamphetamine – applicant had been on remand for approximately 3 months – Incerti J found exceptional circumstances and that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk for the reasons set out in **section 9.4.11** below.

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### **9.4.1.2 SOME CASES IN WHICH EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WERE NOT FOUND AND BAIL WAS REFUSED**

*Anton Majeric*

[a co-accused of *Alexopoulos* {MC15/98}]

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Gillard J, {MC31/98}, 10/07/2002]

His Honour held that the following factors, individually and taken together, did not constitute exceptional circumstances:

* delay;
* 'parity' with co-accused Alexopoulos (a third co-accused was not on bail);
* lack of legal aid for trial; and
* financial hardship of incarceration:

"While I accept the general thrust of what [Hampel J in *Alexopoulos*] said as to the effect of inordinate delay, each case must be considered in relation to its own set of circumstances, and the question of delay is but one factor which must be weighed up with all other circumstances in determining whether or not exceptional circumstances have been shown."

*DPP (Commonwealth) v Thinh Tanh & Others*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J, unreported, 06/12/1995]

The accused were charged with importation of a commercial quantity of heroin (5kg with a street value of $12 million). A magistrate had taken the view that the time the accused had already spent in custody and the delay to trial constituted an exceptional circumstance and released the accused on bail. On appeal by the DPP bail was revoked. Beach J said:

"In my opinion the normal delay which occurs in this State between arrest and committal, and committal and trial, cannot of itself amount to an exceptional circumstance. If there is inordinate delay, it very well may. But that is not the situation in the present case."

*Adam Malkoun*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Nathan J, unreported, 25/03/1988]

The mere fact that it was unlikely that the committal proceedings would be concluded in 2 months' time, did not constitute an exceptional circumstance which would warrant the grant of bail.

*Tarek Sleiman*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Heidgan J, unreported, 05/03/1992]

The accused was caught red-handed trafficking > 30g of heroin. A psychologist assessed the accused as being significantly depressed with some suicidal ideation. His Honour was not persuaded that the accused's psychological state constituted exceptional circumstances when weighed against the seriousness of the alleged offence, likely punishment and strength of the Crown case.

*Mee Tangjamnat*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Smith J, unreported, 13/12/1991]

The accused was a 20 year old Thai charged with importing 1.2kg of heroin while on parole for armed robbery & false imprisonment. His Honour held that delay and the facts that the accused had been cooperative with the police and could offer a surety of $50,000 did not amount to exceptional circumstances.

*Ilie Tundrea*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Ormiston J, unreported, 22/06/1988]

The accused had been charged with trafficking and conspiring to traffick heroin. Bail had been granted until the committal proceedings. The Magistrate who presided over the committal declined to grant bail to the accused but bail was granted to 2 co-accused. That decision was upheld, his Honour holding that, given the seriousness of the offence and the strength of the case, the following factors did not amount to exceptional circumstances:

* substantial delay in the trial; and
* that the accused could resume his tiling business and support his wife and family.

His Honour also doubted that the likelihood of an accused attending his trial was a factor relevant to exceptional circumstances.

*Beljajev v DPP*

(1998) 101 A Crim R 362

The accused had been charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of heroin between 1988 & 1989, between which dates the Crown alleged 13 incidents of heroin trafficking involving some 10.9kg of uncut heroin, of an average purity of 72%. The case was thus in the 'exceptional circumstances' category. The accused's grounds for bail were that:

1. the present and anticipated future delay constituted an exceptional circumstance; and
2. he was not an unacceptable risk; and
3. the Crown case was not strong.

Kellam J found for the accused on the first ground but against him on the others.

1. His Honour held that the accused had demonstrated **exceptional circumstances** based on delay. Reviewing the Supreme Court cases of *Tundrea* [20/06/1988], *Tang* (1995) 83 A Crim R 593, *Alexopoulos* [23/02/1998], *Kantzidis* [August 1996] & *Medici* [27/09/1993], Kellam J said (at pp.368): "In my view it is clear that delay between arrest and final disposition can of itself constitute exceptional circumstances." His Honour continued (at pp.369-70):

"I am satisfied in the circumstances before me that the applicant has demonstrated that there exist exceptional circumstances which would, in the absence of other factors, justify the granting of bail based upon the issue of delay. It is well over 9 years since the applicant was first arrested and charged with the offences upon which he is to be retried. He has spent nearly 3 years in custody and the overwhelming likelihood is that if he is not granted bail he will spend at least several months in custody before the commencement of a trial. If no further order granting bail is made by the trial judge, he could spend almost 4 years in custody before any verdict is obtained."

2. However, despite that finding, his Honour held that the accused was an **unacceptable risk** of failing to appear and accordingly refused bail. His Honour accepted (at p.370) that "the onus of demonstrating that there is such an unacceptable risk is carried by the prosecution. See *Medici* at p.8." After reviewing the evidence, his Honour concluded (at p.376):

"It appears to me on the material presently before me, that there is a risk that the accused man will fail to surrender himself into custody and answer to his bail and a risk that he may commit further offences whilst on bail. The question which has troubled my mind, is whether that risk can be said to be unacceptable. Putting together all of the circumstances, which I am satisfied are established, and notwithstanding the heavy burden that this places upon the applicant, in the light of my conclusion that his time spent in custody to date is, in the circumstances exceptional, I conclude that there is an unacceptable risk that if the applicant were to be released on bail he would fail to surrender himself into custody in answer to his bail. I therefore refuse the application."

*Melas*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coldrey J, unreported, 06/03/1997],

The applicant had been charged with serious drug offences, putting him into the 'exceptional circumstances' category, and his trial had been delayed. Coldrey J found that, notwithstanding the delay, which was considerable, evidence that the applicant had attempted to bribe a prison officer and had created an 'escape kit' rendered him an unacceptable risk of failing to appear and bail was refused.

*Kevin Ng*

[2007] VSC 191

Curtain J found at [23]-[24] the existence of exceptional circumstances constituted by the applicant’s age and lack of prior convictions but refused bail at [25]-[27] on the basis that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of flight and of committing further offences if granted bail.

*Joseph Chucks Unumadu*

[2007] VSC 258

Bongiorno J found exceptional circumstances constituted by delay but refused bail on the basis that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of flight and of interfering with witnesses or otherwise obstructing justice.

In *Re Application for Bail by Tyler Foxwell* [2013] VSC 716 Dixon J found that a likely delay which the prosecution conceded was “substantial” in combination with the youth of the applicant who had no prior convictions and had family support constituted exceptional circumstances. However, his Honour refused bail, holding there was an unacceptable risk of reoffending arising from the applicant’s substantial untreated substance abuse issues.

*Ryan Leigh Johns*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Nettle J]

[2002] VSC 436

A 19 year old accused was charged with murdering an 18 year old by a tae-kwondo style kick to the head outside a hotel which caused the victim to fall to the ground on his head causing massive and ultimately fatal head injuries. His Honour found that a combination of age & personal circumstances of the accused (stable home with mother and offer of employment), the alleged weakness of the Crown case (accused alleging self-defence) and delay did not, alone or in combination, amount to exceptional circumstances.

*DPP v Cuenco*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Warren CJ]

[2003] VSC 485

The 41 year old applicant was charged with murder and attempted murder of workmates employed at the Australia Post Letter Centre in Dandenong. Counsel for the applicant submitted that exceptional circumstances were made out by a combination of:

(i) the applicant's lack of prior criminal history;

(ii) the applicant's clear and impressive work record;

(iii) the lack of strength in the Crown case in that there appeared at this point to be a clear defence of self-defence and provocation open to him;

(iv) the likely period of approaching 18 months delay before trial;

(v) the fact that DNA samples are being obtained and analysed which could support the applicant's version of events;

(vi) the applicant's psychological condition, said by a forensic psychologist to require on-going psychological treatment;

(vii) the applicant's family support and ties; and

(viii) the fact that there was no risk of the applicant not answering bail or interfering with witnesses.

In refusing bail, the Chief Justice was "not satisfied at this point in time that exceptional circumstances have been made out". She considered the application to be premature, noting at [28]:

"It is appropriate in the circumstances of this matter, including some of the conflicting descriptions of events, that the police have the opportunity to complete their investigation, including compiling witnesses reports and also obtaining the necessary DNA analysis. Once these matters are to hand a more appropriate consideration can be made of the Crown case. If, however, it transpires that there were unnecessary delays in the preparation of the Crown case and the obtaining of the DNA analysis it may potentially put the applicant in a different position."

*Ismail Muhaidat*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Kaye J]

[2004] VSC 17

The 23 year old applicant was charged with murder. Counsel for the applicant asserted 3 matters constituted exceptional circumstances:

(i) the lack of strength in the prosecution case;

(ii) the impeding birth of the applicant's child in about 3 weeks' time; and

(iii) the likely period of delay before trial.

In refusing bail, Kaye J held that exceptional circumstances were not made out. His Honour did not find that the Crown case was weak. In relation to the other issues he said at [36]:

"[The impending birth] is a circumstance which is of the character or type which can affect a number of applicants for bail. It is not, in my view, alone or indeed in combination at this stage with questions of potential and not actual delay, an exceptional circumstance. That is not to say that the court is unsympathetic to the accused people, their families and in particular their children where, as a result of matters which are not of their making, delays occur which mean that they might not be brought for trial for some time."

At [16]-[17] his Honour sounded a strong caution about giving detailed reasons in a bail application on the issue of the strength of the Crown case:

[16] "It is well established that at this stage in considering the question of bail, I should say as little as possible on the ultimate prospects of the Crown case. There are a number of very good reasons for that. Firstly, and of course most importantly, if the applicant is committed to trial then it is essentially the province of the jury to pass on the issue of guilt or otherwise. For a judge at this stage to do so, in any terms other than what is strictly necessary, would be both unjust and would also, in my view, prejudice the due administration of justice.

[17] Secondly, where an applicant faces a joint trial there is always the prospect that the case against him might either weaken or strengthen at the trial, depending quite often on the attitude of the co-accused. The co-accused, for various reasons, can either seek to implicate an applicant or indeed on rare occasions support the applicant for reasons of their own."

*Michael Barbaro*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Morris J]

[2004] VSC 404

The applicant was charged with a string of offences, two of which - cultivation of & trafficking a commercial quantity of cannabis - required him to show exceptional circumstances. Counsel for the applicant asserted the following matters constituted exceptional circumstances:

(i) the lack of strength in the prosecution case;

(ii) a co-offender in relation to some of the charges had been granted bail;

(iii) the applicant needed health care in relation to asthma and bowel problems;

(iv) the applicant's wife and family were suffering as a result of him being in custody;

(v) the likely period of delay before trial.

His Honour was not persuaded that any of items (i) - (iv) constituted 'exceptional circumstances' in this case. In relation to item (iv) his Honour said at [13]:

"There is evidence that Mr Barbaro's wife and family are suffering as a result of him being in custody. I find that evidence easy to accept. When a person is placed in custody it not only affects that person but it usually has a very significant and substantial impact upon that person’s loved ones and family. But I cannot be satisfied that that is an “exceptional” circumstance. Rather, I think that this type of impact upon loved ones and family is a common result of a person being in custody. I doubt that the Parliament had in mind that this would be embraced within exceptional circumstances. It may be that family circumstances could sometimes amount to exceptional; but this is not such a case."

His Honour was much more troubled about item (v), the issue of delay. Counsel for the applicant postulated that the delay before a committal was held could be as much as 12 months, with the trial a further 12 months away. The prosecutor submitted it was premature to regard delay as sufficient to establish exceptional circumstances at that stage. At [15]-[16] his Honour said:

"It does not follow that a case based upon delay can never succeed if it is brought shortly after a person is placed in custody. Surely the matter turns on the evidence that is available, and the probabilities. The delays that have been outlined to me seem quite unacceptable in a civilised society, with a modern criminal justice system. These delays seem to be partly in collating evidence, partly within the various court systems, and partly in the prosecution area. It is important that *all* those who have power over the matter do what they can to ensure, not only that persons charged with serious offences are brought to justice, but also that the process of justice is expeditious and fair. It remains possible that the times set out above might be abbreviated by various actions on the part of those responsible; not just in advancing this case at the expense of other cases; but, indeed, in advancing all cases, so as to promote a more expeditious criminal justice system."

Nevertheless, although acknowledging that the case advanced by the applicant in relation to delay was a powerful one, his Honour refused bail, holding at [17] that he was "not sufficiently satisfied at this stage that the possible delay in the trial is sufficient to establish exceptional circumstances which…constitutes a high hurdle".

*Michael Sullivan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Young CJ, {MC17/82}, 11/02/1983]

The applicant was charged with, inter alia, conspiracy to import heroin and trafficking heroin. His de facto wife's funeral was to take place on the day after the bail application and permission to attend the funeral had been denied by the Minister responsible for Corrections. His Honour held that the following matters did not discharge the onus:

(i) the contention that the applicant had "dried out" on remand;

(ii) the applicant's age (36) and lack of criminal history;

(iii) the applicant's 77 year old mother required assistance in the care of the applicant's child; she had previously been assisted by the applicant's brother who had recently died; the child had a deformed foot which required daily manipulation and exercise;

(iv) the applicant's poor health (asthma, test of thyroid, liver and kidney function); and

(v) the impending funeral of his defacto.

*Ashley Douglas Carroll*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Beach J]

[2002] VSC 180

The applicant and a co-accused were charged with murder. The primary matter on which the applicant relied in his bail application was that he would be defending the charge on the basis of self-defence. His Honour considered this did not constitute exceptional circumstances notwithstanding other factors including the deceased's prior history of violence.

*Tran v DPP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Redlich J]

[2004] VSC 296

The 22 year old applicant and a number of co-accused were charged with murder arising from a violent altercation outside the Salt Nightclub. The evidence against the applicant was largely circumstantial, the DPP acknowledging that the state of the evidence does not allow the prosecution to identify with accuracy either the total number of participants involved in the pursuit of the deceased or how many weapons were used or what the precise actions of each of the accused were. The Crown case included an allegation the accused made a false denial borne of a consciousness of guilt, when he told the investigators that he did not know the identity of the persons who had got into his car. The Crown also relied on blood spatter on the applicant's clothing. In addition to the suggested weakness of the Crown case, the applicant also relied on delay. Redlich J was satisfied that there was neither a sufficient risk of the applicant absconding nor of him offending or interfering with witnesses if released on bail. Nevertheless his Honour refused bail, saying at [26]-[29]:

"[26] A sufficiently weak Crown case can constitute exceptional circumstances. Some analysis and assessment of the circumstantial evidence to which the parties have referred me is called for. The stronger the prosecution case, the more cogent other circumstances said to be exceptional would need to be.

[27] Where s. 13 is applicable and upon scrutiny of the Crown case it appears that it has reasonable prospects of success and there is an absence of other circumstances which can be characterised as exceptional, bail will not ordinarily be granted.

[28] Based upon the arguments advanced before me, it appears that the jury will have to determine whether the Applicant’s presence outside the nightclub; the removal of weapons from his car, if that be what the video reveals; the presence of the Applicant in his motor car at the scene of the murder on at least two separate occasions; the use of his vehicle to leave the scene by two of those who apparently attacked the deceased; the disappearance of the weapons used to attack the deceased; the arrival of the Applicant in his motor vehicle outside the Como Hotel, where other accused were together, and the bloodstains on the Applicant’s clothes, might reasonably be explained by a series of innocent hypotheses.

[29] My appraisal of the evidence to which I was referred and the submissions made leads me to conclude that the Crown has reasonable prospects of demonstrating that the competing hypotheses raised by counsel for the Applicant are untenable. That is to say on the arguments as presented the Crown’s case cannot be described as weak. My present view is that the strength of the prosecution case and the relatively short period of delay before the commencement of the trial do not constitute exceptional circumstances."

*CG*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Kaye J]

[2005] VSC 358R

The 18 year old applicant and a number of co-accused were charged with murder arising from a violent altercation at Dandenong. In the course of that altercation the 24 year old deceased was kicked, punched and stomped on by all the accused and at one stage he was struck with an umbrella. The attack lasted approximately five minutes. The deceased was left incapacitated on the ground, breathing heavily and moaning. The Crown alleged that ten minutes later the applicant and a 17 year old co-accused PS returned to the scene of the attack and found the deceased in the same position. The applicant then dropped a large ceramic pot plant weighing 21.5kg on to the deceased’s head and then dropped a second full plastic pot plant on to the deceased’s head. At the same time PS is alleged to have kicked and stomped on the deceased. Counsel for the applicant submitted that a combination of eight factors constituted exceptional circumstances:

1. the applicant’s youth;
2. his lack of any previous criminal history;
3. the requirement that he be held in restrictive protective custody in an adult prison;
4. the expected delay – assessed by Kaye J as being potentially 18 months – if the applicant was committed for trial;
5. the stressors on the applicant and his family particularly arising from his detention in custody including the fact that the applicant was to some extent suffering from psychological problems including depression and anxiety;
6. the Crown case against the applicant was not “open and shut”;
7. the co-accused PS had been granted bail by the Supreme Court;
8. the applicant, if released, would be unlikely to abscond or re-offend.

At [34]-[52] Kaye J analysed each of these factors and found that neither individually nor in combination did they amount to exceptional circumstances. Bail was thus refused.

*Amer Haddara*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Osborn J]

[2006] VSC 8

The applicant was required to establish exceptional circumstances having been charged with an offence under s 102.3 of the *Criminal Code* 1995 (Cth) of intentionally being a memer of a terrorist organisation knowing that the organisation was a terrorist organisation. In finding that the matters relied on by the applicant did not at present constitute exceptional circumstances, Osborn J held:

(i) the Crown case could not be characterised as a weak *prima facie* case;

(ii) the oppressive and onerous conditions in remand, including restricted access to legal representatives, did not constitute exceptional circumstances at the moment, they might be considered exceptional circumstances if they continued for a protracted period;

(iii) strong ties to the jurisdiction, strong family ties and good employment prospects did not transform the case into having ‘exceptional circumstances’; and

(iv) at present he could not conclude that the delay would be such as to constitute exceptional circumstances.

*Boris Beljajev*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-King J]

[2006] VSC 259

The applicant was charged with murder of a business associate who had been a co‑accused in earlier drug importation charges of which the applicant had been acquitted. King J held that the following matters, in combination, did not amount to exceptional circumstances:

1. the Crown case, a circumstantial case which depended on the credibility and accuracy of a number of the witnesses, was neither as strong as the Crown stated nor as weak as the defence submitted;

2. the applicant’s extraordinary legal history, of lengthy trials, grants of bail, revoking of bail, and subsequent acquittals;

3. the applicant’s relatively poor health;

4. the effect of the applicant’s incarceration on his “quite amorphous” business interests;

5. deprivation of contact with the applicant’s wife and son; and

6. potential delay.

*Pak v R*

[2008] VSC 529

The applicant had been charged with trafficking and conspiracy to traffick drugs in July 2008. In November 2008 his application for bail was based on two propositions: first that the prosecution case was very weak and secondly that the likely delay between arrest and committal and any ultimate trial would be such as to constitute exceptional circumstances. At [4] Harper J said of this:

“The two propositions fit together. The weakness or strength of the prosecution case forms a prism through which the court must evaluate the meaning in the particular case of the expression ‘exceptional circumstances’. A circumstance which might qualify as exceptional where the prosecution case is weak would not so qualify or not necessarily so qualify if the prosecution case is strong.”

His Honour refused bail on the grounds that the delay on which the applicant relied did not yet constitute exceptional circumstances. Some 6 months later in May 2009 he re-applied for bail on the basis that a delay in the provision of transcript material meant that a committal had been adjourned until September 2009 making it likely that any trial would not take place until the second half of 2010. In *Pak v R* [2009] VSC 211 Coghlan J accepted that “both new and exceptional circumstances existed, principally because of the question of delay but also taking into account the whole of the circumstances of the case”. However bail was refused because his Honour was “satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of re-offending whilst on bail”.

*Ante Vucak*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Kaye J]

[2009] VSC 167

The applicant was charged with murder, attempted murder and affray. The applicant was 18 years old and was one of 9 young men, whose ages ranged from 15 to 20 years, who had been charged with those offences. He came from a good family, had no previous convictions and at the time of the offences he was employed as an apprentice toolmaker. He was being held on remand in an adult prison. Notwithstanding that seven of the co-accused had been granted bail, Kaye J refused bail, saying at [52]:

“The role of the applicant, standing at the forefront of the planning and the leading of the armed confrontation by nine young men at a public reserve, using dangerous weapons, in a confrontation in which one man was killed and another seriously injured, is a matter of real concern. In the context of such a serious case, I do not consider that the matters such as youth, delay, background and being kept in an adult prison, while they are weighty, are sufficient to be properly characterised as exceptional.”

*R v Rich (Ruling No.19)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Lasry J]

[2008] VSC 538

The applicant was charged with murder and armed robbery. The “lynchpin” of his application for bail was that he needed to have access to the internet in order to prepare his defence by using it to retrieve data to support his alibi defence. In holding that the accused had not demonstrated exceptional circumstances, his Honour said: “Assuming it exists, the evidence indicates that there are at least two alternative means by which this data can be accessed despite the accused being in custody.”

*DPP v Paul Dale*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Cummins J]

[2009] VSC 107

The applicant was charged with murder of an alleged police informant. He was a serving police officer at the time of the alleged offence. Cummins J accepted that exceptional circumstances can be made out by a single factor or a combination of factors which take the case outside “the norm”: *Mustica v DPP* [2006] VSC 441. His Honour found that:

* he could not be satisfied that the prosecution case was weak;
* the applicant’s family circumstances and the state of his business affairs did not constitute exceptional circumstances: *Memory v DPP* [2000] VSC 495;
* the applicant’s “difficult” custodial arrangements – housed on his own in the high security unit at Barwon Prison – were primarily for his own protection, did not handicap him in the preparation of his defence and did not at present constitute exceptional circumstances;
* no untoward delay has yet developed in this case.

Whether taking these matters individually or collectively, his Honour was not satisfied that exceptional circumstances are made out. Moreover, the circumstances of the killing of the deceased, alleged against the applicant for the purpose of eliminating a witness against him, led his Honour to find that the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk even if exceptional circumstances had been made out.

*Bail Application – Jason Yuen*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Coghlan JA]

[2014] VSC 197

The applicant had indicated an intention to plead guilty to trafficking a commercial quantity [almost 1kg] of methylamphetamine and trafficking in 9kg of cannabis and 28g of cocaine. At [7] Coghlan JA said: “In this case, the question of a substantial sentence has passed from possibility to real certainty. It follows that it would not be appropriate to reason that there is virtually no risk of absconding as against concluding that there is a risk based upon avoidance of the inevitable consequence.”

*Omer v DPP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Croucher J]

[2016] VSC 762

The applicant was charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of drugs of dependence, namely methylamphetamine (about 150g pure) and 1,4-butanediol (3,852 litres), the latter valued at nearly $4 million. He had a prior criminal history of using and trafficking drugs. There was an expected delay of up to 2 years between arrest and trial. There were weaknesses in some aspects of the Crown case. The applicant had offered a surety of $180,000. Some coaccused were on bail and others were not. In refusing bail, Croucher J drew at [5]-[6] a distinction between exceptional circumstances, showing cause and unacceptable risk:

[5] “While, in light of Mr Omer’s criminal history and the circumstances of the alleged offences, I am satisfied that there is some risk that, if released on bail, he would commit an offence of drug-trafficking and thereby endanger others, I am not satisfied that such risks are at an unacceptable level given among other things, the strict bail conditions that could be put in place and the availability of a substantial surety.

[6] However, I am not satisfied there are exceptional circumstances which justify a grant of bail While it will be cold comfort to Mr Omer, I reach this conclusion with some hesitation. The expected delay between his arrest and his trial in the County Court is in the order of two years. That unfortunate period of delay, when combined with the availability of a surety and strict conditions, weaknesses in some aspects of the prosecution case and all other considerations, is such that, were this a case in which Mr Omer only had to show cause why his detention is not justified, I would have granted bail. But the test is a higher one than that. As compelling as those factors may be, and as troubling as it is that it is almost commonplace that a person has to wait two years without bail for a trial on serious charges, those factors, either alone or in combination do not, in my judgment, amount to exceptional circumstances. Accordingly, I must refuse the application.”

*Murat Kaya*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Elliott J]

[2016] VSC 712

The 25 year old applicant was charged with one terrorism offence, namely preparations for incursions into foreign countries – originally thought to be Syria or Northern Iraq but subsequently believed to be the Philippines – for the purpose of engaging in hostile activities. The applicant is a tiler by trade who has owned and operated his own business for 4-5 years. He has no prior criminal history, is married and has a young child. He has stable accommodation and strong ties to Melbourne. He offered a surety of $300,000. In refusing bail Elliott J held at [40]-[55] that the following were not exceptional circumstances, either alone or collectively-

* the delay to date together with the expected delay – 18 months to 2 years in the submission of the applicant – given that terrorism cases of their nature are likely to be long and involved;
* a surety of $300,000, given the nature and gravity of the charge;
* the ability of the court to set appropriate conditions of bail;
* the fact that the applicant had no plans to commit any terrorist act in Australia;
* the fact that the applicant had been placed in a protection unit as a direct consequence of the charge;
* the fact that the charge would need to be amended in the way set out in [53].

Finally his Honour held at [59]:

“Further, given the alleged stated desires of the applicant and his association with Islamic State, even though there is no evidence of any previous intention to cause harm to anyone in Australia, in my view, the evidence when looked at as a whole demonstrates there is an unacceptable risk that if bail were granted the applicant would commit an offence whilst on bail, or endanger the safety or welfare of members of the public.”

*Luke McNally*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Champion J]

[2018] VSC 522

The 34 year old applicant was charged with 11 charges relating to trafficking in and possession of methylamphetamine and precursor chemicals, 20 charges of reckless conduct endangering serious injury and further charges of resisting police, unauthorized possession of a weapon and ammunition and arson. The applicant – who identifies as indigenous – has a criminal history in Queensland, including a number of prior offences of possession of drugs and weapons, and at the time of the alleged offending in Victoria was on bail for a large number of matters in Queensland, including two charges on which he was awaiting sentence in the Supreme Court. Some of the pending Queensland matters related to illicit drugs of dependence. The prosecution alleged that the applicant is the head of a drug syndicate involved in importing ephedrine from China and manufacturing and trafficking methylamphetamine on a large scale. The applicant had been in custody for a little over 7 months and was facing a contested committal in a month’s time. There were two co-accused facing a much smaller number of charges. One had been charged on summons with one count of trafficking methylamphetamine. The other was charged with trafficking and possession of methylamphetamine and MDMA and had been granted bail on his own undertaking with conditions. In refusing bail his Honour held that-

* the prosecution case could not be said to be a weak one but appeared to indicate a well organised syndicate and sophisticated drug manufacturing operation;
* there will not be a significant delay in concluding the committal;
* the applicant’s criminal history had some significance; he currently faces outstanding charges in Queensland and was on bail from Queensland courts at the time of his alleged offending in Victoria;
* the applicant is unemployed with few connections to Victoria;
* his proposal to attend a residential drug treatment facility and provide a substantial surety come nowhere near amounting to exceptional circumstances, either individually or in combination with all other relevant factors.

*CT*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Champion J]

[2018] VSC 559

The 16 year old applicant was charged with robbery (x2), affray, theft (x3), intentionally causing injury, recklessly causing injury, assault by kicking and assault in company. At the time of the alleged offending the applicant was on bail and on summons in respect of six outstanding sets of charges. He was also subject to a 12 month probation order following a finding of guilt of offences of affray, unlawful assault (x2) and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He was refused bail in the Children’s Court and had been in remand for about 7 weeks. He was reported as having been involved in six incidents whilst on remand, including threatening and assaulting other youths and staff. Youth Justice did not support bail but was willing to supervise the applicant should he be granted bail. Both parties accepted that the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test applied pursuant to what has become s.4AA(2)(c) of the **BA**. In finding that the applicant had not established exceptional circumstances, Champion J stated at [78]-[79]: “While acknowledging the allegations are unproven, the bail history of the applicant suggests that he has defied court bail orders on multiple occasions this year. The extent of this allegation gives me little confidence that the applicant would comply with a bail order from this Court. Further I am not of the opinion that stringent bail conditions would alleviate the risk that the applicant would offend whilst on bail and be a danger to members of the community.”

*BA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Tinney J]

[2018] VSC 665

The applicant was a 14 year old Aboriginal child who had “a troubling recent history of offending”. He was charged with aggravated home invasion, aggravated burglary and attempted aggravated burglary in circumstances where he and 2 co-accused entered residential premises at night after one of the co-accused had kicked down the front door. The 2 co-accused were carrying items that looked like Tasers. One co-accused demanded car keys from an occupant and then kicked him with a karate-style kick resulting in a head wound that required 13 stitches. The applicant was on bail for other alleged offending and was also on a 12 month youth supervision order. Bail was refused, no exceptional circumstances having been made out and in any event would have been refused on the basis that there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant would commit further offences on bail: “His escalating poor behaviour and seeming unwillingness to modify his behaviour raise powerful concerns that he may represent a danger to the community.”

*Sarah Azimi*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 118

The 33 year old applicant had been charged with aggravated carjacking and had been granted bail with conditions including that she not contact witnesses for the prosecution other than the informant. Within a week she is alleged to have engaged in a text message exchange with one of the victims in the aggravated carjacking, as a result of which she was arrested and charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice, harassing a witness and related bail offences. She has two children, aged 11 and 6, for whom she was the primary and only carer. The children are currently living with their maternal grandparents, but are said to be ‘traumatised’ by their lack of contact with their mother. While the applicant was unemployed at the time of her arrest, she has a history of employment which includes eight years working as a pharmacy manager. The applicant has no criminal history and this is her first time in custody. Notwithstanding her strong family support and the expectation that she would spend “at least 18 months on remand, even stretching up to 2 years”, his Honour found that exceptional circumstances were not established and bail was refused.

*Lado*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 132

The applicant was a 19 year old youth charged with robbery, intentionally causing injury and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He had prior convictions in the Children’s Court for armed robbery, carjacking and affray. CISP support was available but the Youth Justice report was unfavourable. Exceptional circumstances were not established but the applicant was held to be an unacceptable risk in any event.

*El-Refei [No.2]*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Incerti J]

[2020] VSC 164 [07/04/2020] – Bail previously refused: see [2020] VSC 65 [24/02/2020]

On 20/12/2019 the 46 year old applicant was charged with offences including aggravated home invasion with a firearm, possessing a firearm being a prohibited person, intentionally causing serious injury and possessing methylamphetamine. He had been refused bail by the Magistrates’ Court on 23/12/2019 and by Incerti J on 24/02/2020. It was conceded that new facts and circumstances had since arisen by virtue of unexpected further delay caused by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the justice system. At [19]-[21] Incerti J accepted that the COVID-19 pandemic “poses a risk of court dates being postponed and anticipated periods of remand being extended”. However, citing Tinney J in *Re Tong* [2020] VSC 141 at [33], her Honour said at [23]: “It should not be thought that the current health crisis facing our community will in every case be a matter which will lead to a conclusion of the existence of exceptional circumstances, less still that it will necessarily lead to a grant of bail.” The serious offences charged, the applicant’s significant criminal history between 2014 & 2019 including driving, theft, drug and weapons related offences, his poor performance on bail and while on community correction orders all militated against a conclusion that the circumstances surrounding his further application for bail were exceptional. Further he remained an unacceptable risk of endangering public safety and committing further offences if released on bail. Bail was refused.

*DR*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 282

The 17 year old child applicant was charged with aggravated home invasion and other offences. He had a prior criminal history involving offences of violence and was on Youth Justice supervised bail and was subject to a youth supervision order at the time of the offending. He was also in breach of a curfew. The period on remand was unlikely to exceed any sentence imposed in the event he was found guilty. Although Youth Justice was still supportive and the applicant had family support and stable accommodation, bail was refused on the basis that he had failed to show exceptional circumstances. Further he was an unacceptable risk in any event.

*IH*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 325

The 14 year old Aboriginal child applicant with a relatively low cognitive level was charged with armed robbery, aggravated home invasion and other serious offences. He was on bail and was subject to a youth supervision order at the time of the offending. His Honour considered that “it cannot be concluded in this case that the period on remand would exceed the likely period of incarceration” in the event he was found guilty. Although Youth Justice was still supportive and the applicant was on a family reunification order and had supervised accommodation and supports available, bail was refused on the basis that he had failed to show exceptional circumstances. Further he was an unacceptable risk in any event.

*Jacob Ford*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2021] VSC 519

The 35 year old applicant was charged with murder. The major consideration with respect to the issue of ‘exceptional circumstances’ was the strength of the prosecution case. The applicant had referred to the cases of *Memery v The Queen* [2000] VSC 495 (Gillard J), *Re Harry Dickenson* [2020] VSC 721, [24]-[25] (Elliott J) and *Re Wilson* [2021] VSC 22, [47] (Coghlan JA) where the applicant for bail charged with murder was found to have demonstrated ‘exceptional circumstances’ because the applicant was found to have ‘good prospects’ of a jury not being satisfied of guilt beyond reasonable doubt. In refusing bail Taylor J said:

[62] “As a matter of principle, it is beyond doubt that the weakness of the prosecution case may, alone or in combination, be sufficient for an applicant for bail to discharge the burden in demonstrating exceptional circumstances. Each case must turn on its own facts.”

[73] While there are triable issues in the Crown case against the applicant as to the existence and nature of the agreement, arrangement or understanding he is alleged to have entered into with his co-accused, I am not persuaded that the prosecution case is so weak as to amount to exceptional circumstances.”

[74] Nor am I persuaded that the strength of the prosecution case in combination with the applicant’s ties to the jurisdiction, offer of accommodation and offer of work amount to exceptional circumstances.”

*Benjamin Strachan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 538

The 42 year old applicant was charged with one charge of persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order (‘FVIO’), seven charges of contravening a FVIO, one charge of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and seven charges of contravening a conduct condition of bail. The complainant is the applicant’s wife, CS, with whom he was in a relationship for 10 years before separating in May 2021. They have 4 children aged between 2y & 9y. CS has told police that she is terrified for her safety and believes that the applicant was following her prior to his arrest and that, if granted bail, will ‘come after her’ and violently assault her. She also expressed concern at the fact that the applicant approached their daughter at school, in CS’s absence, and stated that she is terrified that the applicant will either harm their children or attempt to abscond with them. At [27] his Honour said:

“The Act does not define what is meant by ‘exceptional circumstances’. However, its meaning has been the subject of much judicial consideration, and the established principles have previously been summarised by me and other judges of this Court to the following effect:

* 1. The circumstances relied upon must be such as to take the case out of the normal so as to justify the admission of the applicant to bail.
  2. Whilst the threshold of exceptional circumstances is high, it is not an impossible standard to reach.

Furthermore, exceptional circumstances may be established by a combination of circumstances which may, by themselves, not be considered exceptional.”

In finding that exception circumstances were not made out, Lasry J held that if the applicant were to remain in custody between now and the hearing of the contested matter in the Magistrates’ Court it is not clear that the period on remand would exceed any sentence likely to be imposed and did “not regard the asserted family hardship as being of great significance”.

*Stacey Fernandez*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2021] VSC 860

The 28 year old applicant was charged with trafficking a commercial quantity of methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine, dealing with property suspected of being the proceeds of crime, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, possession of cartridge ammunition without licence or permit and possession of a prohibited weapon. In finding that exceptional circumstances were not established Taylor J said at [44]-[47]:

[44] The applicant has referred to authorities in which the fact and quality of residential drug rehabilitation programs have been critical to a finding of exceptional circumstances. While the availability of a placement at a residential drug rehabilitation program can, alone or in combination with other factors, sometimes meet the requisite statutory threshold, each case must turn on its own facts. In this case, the applicant has previously been resistant to multiple community based rehabilitation attempts and, specifically, failed to engage at all in a court sponsored rehabilitation program at Odyssey House. She has unsuccessfully attempted the Court Integrated Services Program (‘CISP’) three times.

[45] While the applicant has participated well in the drug and alcohol program offered by Caraniche Pty Ltd at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and has, since 6 October 2021, returned negative urinalysis results, given her history that alone is insufficient to persuade me that exceptional circumstances exist.

[46] Nor am I satisfied of that fact when the issue is considered in combination with the other circumstances. While there will be a delay in the hearing of the applicant’s trial, that delay will not be inordinate and, it was not (and nor could it be) submitted that the delay would be such that, in the event that the applicant is found guilty of the more serious charges, the period of remand would exceed the length of the likely sentence received.

[47] Moreover, the prosecution case cannot be said to be a weak one. The applicant was found in a car with the co-accused outside a known drug house at one o’clock in the morning. She disavowed all knowledge of the drugs found on Mason to police while at the same time secreting $9,635 in her underwear and 9.7 grams of methylamphetamine upon her person.”

Further, the applicant was an unacceptable risk given that her “prior history of bail compliance is extremely poor, as is her history of compliance with CCOs”.

*Steven Desic*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2022] VSC 537

The 30 year old applicant was charged with attempting to traffick a commercial quantity of methamphetamine (111kg with an approximate street value of $55 million), unlicensed possession of firearms and other charges. The applicant proposed residing at a rehabilitation facility to treat his drug addiction and offered sureties. In finding that exceptional circumstances were not established, Lasry J said at [59]-[61]:

[59] “In this case, given the nature of the offending and its seriousness, I do not regard the circumstances relied upon by the applicant as being in any sense out of the normal to justify the admission of the applicant to bail. I accept that the applicant’s circumstances will be difficult if he continues to remain in custody and does not undertake the residential rehabilitation program. However, as the respondent points out, the residential rehabilitation program is aimed at assisting him with his personal addiction to methylamphetamine and has almost nothing to do with the business venture that he entered into to import a very large amount of that drug into Australia.

[60] I also do not consider that any real issue of parity arises with the co-accused. Reliance was placed on the situation of James Tims, who is an alleged accomplice, but it appears to be true that the role of Tims is a lesser role in this matter than the role of the applicant.

[61] Overall, to adopt the reasoning of the Court of Appeal in *Roberts* [2021] VSCA 28, I do not consider that a refusal of bail in this case will be productive of future injustice.”

*Re RN*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

[2023] VSC 9

The 13 year old applicant was charged with a Schedule 2 offence (aggravated burglary) while on bail for numerous other offences. In total the charges against him were in 19 unresolved briefs covering the period from 16/05/2022 to 23/11/2022 and were summarised at [3] as follows:

“The applicant has allegedly committed a staggering number of offences. On my calculation, the applicant faces 181 separate charges, including more than a dozen charges of aggravated burglary and multiple charges of home invasion, burglary, theft, robbery, attempted robbery, affray, intentionally causing injury, assault, assault in company, assault by kicking, assault with a weapon, damaging property, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, and other offences. Indeed, the extent of his alleged criminal activity is breathtaking.”

A Children’s Court magistrate had ordered a report concerning the issue of *doli incapax* and whether the applicant could be found guilty of the offences charged. That report – dating from November 2022 – expressed the opinion that the presumption was rebutted. The applicant’s solicitor had sought another *doli incapax* report which was still pending.

Counsel for the respondent “very fairly submitted that on the material presently before the Court ... the applicant may be able [to] establish that exceptional circumstances exist to justify the grant of bail” but contended that “there is still a risk that the applicant would, if released on bail, continue to commit offences whilst on bail, and endanger the safety and welfare of other members of the community, and the risk is an unacceptable risk”.

Counsel for the applicant had submitted that the following 8 factors amounted to exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail:

* the need to consider all other options before remanding a child in custody;
* the applicant’s family support;
* his lack of criminal history;
* the likely sentence;
* delay;
* the applicant’s age;
* his language disorder and cognitive functioning; and
* the support of Youth Justice, Child Protection and other services.

In refusing bail his Honour–

* held at [25] that none of the above 8 factors amounted to exceptional circumstances whether considered alone or in combination; and
* noted at [24] that when interpreting the Act, the court is required by s.1B to take into account:

1. maximising the safety of the community and persons affected by crime to the greatest extent possible; and
2. the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty.

However, it is noteworthy that his Honour had stated at [21]‑[22]:

“I also adopt the observations of T Forrest J in *JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] concerning the exceptional circumstances test as it applies to children:

Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of [s 3B(1).](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cyafa2005252/s3b.html) In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in [s 3B(1)](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cyafa2005252/s3b.html) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.

Moreover, as was observed in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [55] per Maxwell P and Kaye JA:

[Section 3B](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cyafa2005252/s3b.html) of the Act reflects the underlying principle in the criminal justice system that a decision to hold a child in custody should be made only as of a last resort. In considering whether to grant bail, and in the sentencing process, courts are astute to avoid imposing a term of detention, unless there is no other reasonable disposition available.

See also *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372 at [23] per Priest JA.”

Unsurprisingly, his Honour also found at [34]-[37] that RN presents an unacceptable risk, and that there are no conditions available that would render the risks posed by him to be acceptable.

Other cases in which exceptional circumstances were not found and bail was refused include:

* *R v Kristofer Simpas* [2006] VSC 180 (Harper J-murder).
* *DPP (Vic) v Koumis* [2006] VSC 416 (Coldrey J-trafficking commercial quantities of drugs).
* *Douglas Victor Jensen* [2006] VSC 450 (Hollingworth J-murder).
* *Re Shoue Hammoud* [2006] VSC 516 (Bongiorno J-terrorism offences).
* *Re Ezzit Raad* [2006] VSC 330 (Bongiorno J-terrorism offences).
* *Re Shaun Benporath* [2007] VSC 375 (Curtain J-murder).
* *Re James Alexander Hipworth* [2007] VSC 565.
* *Re Turner* [2008] VSC 193 (Hollingworth J-murder of her former de facto).
* *Re Daniel Sazdov* [2008] VSC 605 (Cavanough J-murder and other offences of violence).
* *Re Horty Mokbel* [2008] VSC 608 (Bongiorno J-serious drug offences).
* *DPP v Morison* [2008] VSC 609 (Cummins J-murder).
* *Dunne v The Queen* [2009] VSC 148 (King J-murder).
* *Re Susanne Chopin* [2009] VSC 313 (Harper J-trafficking in a commercial quantity of cocaine).
* *Re Eileen Creamer* [2009] VSC 460 (Whelan J-murder/12-18 months delay/accused suffering depression/no strong ties to Victoria).
* *Re Ahmed Hablas* [2010] VSC 429 (Williams J-murder).
* *Re Erol Ramazanoglu* [2012] VSC 645 (Coghlan J-attempt to possess commercial quantity of cocaine & methamphetamine/dispute in relation to accused’s medical treatment/unacceptable risk of failing to appear).
* *Re Carl Redenbach* [2012] VSC 646 (Coghlan J-possession of commercial quantity of GHB, receiving stolen goods/delay not sufficient/unacceptable risk of failing to appear).
* *Bail Application – Dalton* [2013] VSC 690 (Kaye J-conspiracy to traffick large commercial quantity of methamphetamine and other charges/alleged weakness of prosecution case not accepted/ unacceptable risk of reoffending).
* *Re Duc Truong Nguyen* [2014] VSC 631 (Bongiorno J-trafficking in commercial quantity of cannabis/delay not sufficient to constitute exceptional circumstances).
* *The Queen v Chung, Chi Thanh* [2015] VSC 487 (Lasry J-large commercial quantity of drugs/principles/delay/whether surety relevant).
* *Re Afram* [2018] VSC 708 (Tinney J-aggravated home invasion & armed robbery – use of handgun – previous breach of conditions of bail – serious prior conviction for being a prohibited person in possession of firearms – combination of circumstances relied on, including availability of residential treatment for drug addiction of applicant – exceptional circumstances not shown – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Frank* [2018] VSC 718 (Champion J-murder/case against applicant not weak although self-defence appears to be arguable/strength of prosecution case will likely be clearer after the committal hearing).
* *Re Ghanim* [2019] VSC 358 (Lasry J-19 year old applicant charged with aggravated home invasion, home invasion and numerous other offences/applicant was on youth parole at time of alleged offences/release on supervised bail program not supported by Youth Justice/significant criminal history/prior convictions for bail offences/exceptional circumstances not established/unacceptable risk).
* *Re K M Nguyen* [2019] VSC 698 (Almond J-traffick not less than a large commercial quantity of methamphetamine & heroin in a substantial business/delay not sufficient to constitute exceptional circumstances [26]/parity not made out [41]).
* *Re Anthony Bertucci* [2020] VSC 88 (Tinney J-38 year old applicant charged with 18 counts of contravention of a family violence intervention order and one count of persistent contravention of a FVIO – complainant was his partner of 10 years and mother of his 3 children with whom he was now reconciled and who supported his application – after having been granted bail by a magistrate he failed to appear and was bailed by police and then failed to appear again – he was subsequently charged with recklessly causing injury, 2 counts of unlawful assault, a further charge of contravention of a FVIO and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – favourable attitude of complainant to grant of bail important but not determinative – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Velluto* [2020] VSC 188 (Tinney J-36 year old applicant charged with dishonesty and other offending allegedly committed while on bail – significant criminal history showing poor compliance with court orders – drug problem – exceptional circumstances not established notwithstanding delay including COVID-19 considerations – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Sepehrnia* [2020] VSC 247 (Tinney J-27 year old applicant with extensive criminal history charged with rape and other offences committed against two consecutive domestic partners and committed during the period of a community correction order – at time of second rape on bail for first rape – applicant already remanded for 252 days – notwithstanding delay and COVID-19 implications exceptional circumstances were not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *DPP v Lee* [2020] VSC 275 (Tinney J/DPP appeal against magistrate’s grant of bail - respondent charged with charged with importing a commercial quantity of a border controlled drug, attempting to possess a commercial quantity of a border controlled drug, and failing to comply with an order under s 3LA *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth) – not reasonably open for magistrate to be satisfied of exceptional circumstances – appeal allowed – order granting bail set aside – fresh application for bail on new material refused).
* *Re Mazzitelli* [2020] VSC 288 (Tinney J-42 year old applicant charged with family violence offences and attempting to pervert the course of justice – some criminal history including convictions for failing to answer bail and breaching conditions of bail – bail granted and revoked on two previous occasions in this case – continuing use of illicit drugs by applicant in breach of conditions of bail – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Barker* [2020] VSC 321 (Champion J – 27 year old applicant charged withaggravated carjacking, armed robbery, reckless conduct endangering life, arson, common law assault and possessing a drug of dependence – alleged offences committed while applicant on a Community Correction Order – significant criminal history including breach of CCO and 8 breach of bail offences – if convicted applicant likely to face a sentence of imprisonment exceeding the delay before the case is finalised – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Hamad* [2020] VSC 440 (Tinney J – 25 year old Irqai born Australian citizen charged with murder intentionally causing injury and attempting to pervert the course of justice – plan by applicant and others to assault victim with baseball bats over a drug debt – victim ambushed in front yard of property and then shot dead by coaccused HA – threats to co-offender HO and his family to have that co-offender accept responsibility for the murder – strength of prosecution case – notwithstanding delay and onerous conditions of remand due to COVID-19 exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk of applicant endangering safety of co-offender HO and family if bail granted).
* *Re Baker* [2020] VSC 460 (Coghlan JA – 53 year old applicant with a 32 year history of heroin addiction charged with murder of his former partner – applicant relied primarily on asserted weakness of the prosecution case – his Honour referred to dicta of Kaye J in *Re John McDonald* [2010] VSC 217 cited with approval by Beach JA in *Re Sam* [2017] VSC 91 but ultimately held that the prosecution case, albeit circumstantial, was not a weak one – bail refused).
* *Re McHenry* [2020] VSC 462 (Coghlan JA – 24 year old applicant charged with intentionally causing injury, armed with criminal intent, theft of motor vehicle, attempted burglary and other offences at a time at which he was serving a CCO imposed in the County Court following convictions for aggravated home invasion and intentionally causing injury – case not regarded as weak – exceptional circumstances not made out).
* *Re Scott Goldsworthy* [2020] VSC 500 (Lasry J- accused with no prior criminal record charged with rape, family violence and persistent contravention of Family Violence Intervention Order – delay and impact of COVID-19 not sufficient to establish exceptional circumstances).
* *Re Hokafonu* [2020] VSC 543 (Coghlan JA-charges of attempted murder and possession of an unregistered handgun – exceptional circumstances not established).
* *Re AM* [2020] VSC 569 (Tinney J- 18 year old applicant charged with murder (common law and statutory) arising from planned robbery with gang connection – applicant on bail and subject to probation at time for earlier violent offending – poor bail history and noncompliance with conditions of probation order – unfavourable report by Youth Justice but bail support still on offer – numerous violent incidents since applicant in custody - questionable strength of prosecution case – family support available – case fast tracked into Supreme Court but 18 month delay still likely – onerous conditions in custody – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Shane McKay* [2020] VSC 558 (Tinney J- 27 year old Aboriginal applicant facing dishonesty, assault, breach of family violence intervention order, drugs and reckless conduct charges – applicant had significant criminal history and poor compliance with previous CCO orders and was on multiple grants of bail at time – strong support from former foster mother and stable residence on offer plus CISP support – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk).
* *Re James* [2020] VSC 602 (Tinney J – 36 year old applicant charged with attempting to possess a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine {180kg with purity of 80.3%} – notwithstanding delay, the offer of substantial sureties and availability of residential drug treatment exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Cohrs* [2020] VSC 607 (Coghlan JA- 41 year old applicant charged with the shotgun murder of his mother just hours after he had allegedly fatally shot his brother – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Dixon* [2020] VSC 665 (Tinney J – attempted murder by applicant and two co-offenders – victim shot to head from close range – applicant an Irish national extradited from NSW after the shooting – case reasonably strong – surety unsatisfactory – although delay likely to be over 2 years exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Wilio* [2020] VSC 677 (Tinney J – 23 year old applicant charged with murder by use of double-barrelled shotgun from close range in the context of a planned armed robbery – case of reasonable strength – delay not excessive – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re MM* [2020] VSC 691 (Jane Dixon J – 33 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of amphetamine and other drugs and firearms offences – notwithstanding the availability of a place at a residential rehabilitation facility and the anticipated delay due to COVID-19, exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Rahman* [2020] VSC 748(Coghlan JA – 18 year old applicant charged with murder and statutory murder – phone evidence re involvement – able to do VCE exams in custody – refused – subsequently granted, see [2021] VSC 402).
* *Re De Camillis* [2020] VSC 761 (Tinney J – 35 year old applicant charged with family violence offending while on bail for other offences – long history of criminal offending and breaches of bail).
* *Re JL* [2020] VSC 785 (Jane Dixon J – 51 year old applicant on charges relating to family violence against his former intimate partner whilst on a CCO – offending with a knife – despite availability of a place at residential rehabilitation facility and anticipated delay due to COVID19 pandemic, exceptional circumstances not found – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Omar Kakar* [2020] VSC 806 (Beach JA –32 year old applicant with substance abuse problem and a criminal history was charged withaggravated carjacking, theft of motor vehicle (3 charges), reckless conduct endangering life, prohibited person possessing or using firearm (2 charges), threat to kill, possessing ammunition without a licence, possessing a drug of dependence (3 charges), aggravated burglary, theft and committing an indictable offence while on bail – exceptional circumstances not made out – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Candice Harper* [2020] VSC 855 (Priest JA-44 year old applicant with a “significant and concerning criminal history” charged with murder and affray –strong prosecution case with CCTV footage showing the involvement of all the accused including the applicant in the commission of the offences – circumstances “fall a long way short of being exceptional” – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Cameron Oakley* [2021] VSC 183 (Coghlan JA-27 year old applicant charged with murder – accused will be relying on self-defence at trial but his Honour did not regard the prosecution case as week – his Honour did not anticipate that “delay will be particularly out of the ordinary” – exceptional circumstances not made out – bail refused).
* *Re Pollard* [2021] VSC 315 (Tinney J-29 year old applicant with substantial criminal history and poor bail history charged with drug trafficking and other charges while on bail and subject to a CCO – likely delay of 9-12 months – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Glasby* [2021] VSC 428 (Champion J-30 year old applicant charged with contravening a family violence intervention order, persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, criminal damage and attempting to pervert the course of justice while on bail and summons in three other matters at the time of alleged offending involving the same complainant, his former partner – limited prior criminal history but prior conviction for similar offences against another former partner – applicant was subject to child protection involvement throughout his childhood and spent large parts of his early years in the care of his grandmother before moving into residential care from when he was an early teenager – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk – bail refused).
* *Re Tiba* [2021] VSC 429 (Coghlan JA-22 year old applicant charged with murder categorised as “a serious example of the crime of murder carried out for revenge, although the ‘wrong’ victim was killed” with the applicant “being at the heart of the offending” – exceptional circumstances not established – prosecution case is that applicant sought out a person to seek revenge and that person is now the principal witness for the murder – “the risk to him is both patent and unacceptable” – bail refused).
* *Re Nhat L* [2021] VSC 446 (Jane Dixon J-34 year old applicant who was a Vietnamese national and holder of an Australian bridging visa charged with attempting to possess a commercial quantity of methamphetamine and other Commonwealth offences charges including drug trafficking – two of three co-accused already bailed – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk of offending – bail refused). On the issue of delay her Honour said at [49]-[50]:

“I acknowledge the recent decisions of Lasry J in *Re Jiang* [2021] VSC 148, [60]and *Re Warda*…and his Honour’s finding in *Re Jiang* that a delay of three years will demonstrate exceptional circumstances in almost every case. Further, I note his Honour’s observation in *Re Warda* that a long delay represents injustice in any case: [2021] VSC, [53]…Whilst accepting that a delay of three years is a concerning period to be on remand, I agree with the remarks of Tinney J in *Re James* [2020] VSC 602 that delay must be considered in the context of the case as a whole. Although the applicant’s situation is factually distinguishable from that of the applicant in *Re James,* given the applicant’s more limited criminal history, I nonetheless consider that the principles referred to by Tinney Jhave some resonance in the present case having regard to the seriousness of the applicant’s alleged offending and the strength of the Crown case.”)

* *Re Hyman* [2021] VSC 491 (Lasry J-49 year old applicant with low mental functioning, a serious criminal history and a long-standing heroin addiction charged with recklessly cause injury, threat to kill, assault, contravening a family violence intervention order and committing an indictable offence while on bail — CISP support was available if granted bail – the 2 complainants were BC with whom the applicant had been in a sexual relationship for 6m approximately 15y ago but who had remained in contact and KV who had been in a 4y relationship with the applicant and was 18 weeks pregnant with their child – the DFFH child protection practitioner involved with KV and her 17 month old child HLV expressed strong concerns that, if granted bail, the applicant will pose a serious risk of physical and emotional harm to KV and HLV in circumstances where HLV is a particularly vulnerable infant, having been born at just 26 weeks’ gestation – BC told police she is ‘extremely fearful’ of the applicant being granted bail – the applicant had been on remand for 8 months with the case listed for a contested hearing in a further 3 months. On the issue of delay his Honour referred at [26] to dicta in *Jason Joseph Roberts v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 28 at [47]-[48] and concluded at [84]:

“If I had formed the view that the overwhelmingly likely outcome of the contested hearing of the matter in Magistrates Court will be the applicant’s acquittal, then it may well be able to be said his continued incarceration would be productive of injustice. That is not the position I am in. Although there are triable issues in this matter and there is some basis for the criticism of the complainants’ credibility, I cannot conclude that the evidence at the contested hearing will be so defective that the applicant will be acquitted. My ability to assess the witnesses’ credibility is limited to dated prior criminal convictions and a finding that one of the complainants was an unreliable witness at an earlier hearing before a different judicial officer. In addition, the allegations, if proved, are very serious.”)

* *Re Biancotto* [2021] VSC 754 (Niall JA-25 year old applicant, with diagnoses of ADD/ADHD and a history of drug use, reportedly using methamphetamine daily for 7 years and also having a cannabis dependency – charged with persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order (‘FVIO’), contravening a FVIO and other matters including a number of offences of violence – the complainant is the applicant’s former intimate partner – first time in custody – applicant listed as respondent in 18 family violence incidents involving the complainant and 2 former partners and 5 incidents involving violence against his parents – exceptional circumstances not made out).
* *Re NP* [2021] VSC 857 (Niall JA-40 year old applicant with significant and relevant prior criminal history spanning 2003 and 2020 who was on CCO when charged with aggravated carjacking and intentionally causing serious injury – two incidents both involving a weapon – “as the applicant’s use of methamphetamine increased, it was associated with a good deal of criminal offending” – delay, current long period on remand and questions about strength of crown case not sufficient to constitute exceptional circumstances – in any event unacceptable risk based on applicant’s extensive criminal history and fact he offended while on bail on 4 occasions – risk could not be rendered acceptable by conditions, including a condition re residence at The Cottage).
* *Re VM* [2021] VSC 874 (Lasry J-50 year old applicant charged with attempted murder, false imprisonment, reckless conduct endangering life, making a threat to kill, using a carriage service to menace and other violence offending in a family violence context – notwithstanding first time in custody for a prolonged period, onerous custodial conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and CISP support, exceptional circumstances were not established).
* *Re Quach* [2022] VSC 7 (Priest JA-36 year old applicant charged with cultivate/traffick not less than a commercial quantity of cannabis – the prosecution alleges that the applicant is the leader of a cannabis cultivation syndicate and engaged in the business of trafficking cannabis between 21 August 2019 and 9 September 2021, being involved in all aspects of cannabis cultivation across the five cannabis crop factories in outer suburban Melbourne – exceptional circumstances not established – in any event applicant poses an unacceptable risk that he would not answer bail if it were granted – he is not an Australian citizen and does not have ties to the community of the same kind as co-offender Pham who had been granted bail – further the applicant has access to false identification documents and at least one ‘burner’ telephone).
* *Re Mizzi* [2022] VSC 14 (Champion J-36 year old applicant charged with stalking, using a carriage service to harass, persistent contravention of FVIOs and arson – complainant is his ex-wife – applicant has a very poor history of relevant criminal offending and breaches of court orders – exceptional circumstances not made out notwithstanding applicant’s acceptance into a residential drug rehabilitation program – in any event Champion J noted that he “would have easily concluded” that the applicant represents an unacceptable risk based on his poor criminal history with respect to the complainant and his demonstrated disregard for previous court orders).
* *Re Kontogeorgis* [2022] VSC 44 (Champion J-59 year old applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering serious injury, intentionally causing injury, unlawful assault, criminal damage, careless driving, contravening an interim FVIO – the complainants are applicant’s ex-wife and her new partner – lengthy criminal history – exceptional circumstances not found – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Sahingoz* [2022] VSC 191 (Champion J-40 year old applicant with extensive prior criminal history (albeit limited since 2014) charged with drug trafficking, drug possession, possessing a prohibited weapon and bail offences – strong prosecution case – exceptional circumstances not found notwithstanding acceptance into a residential drug rehabilitation program – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Kelly* [2022] VSC 232 (Tinney J-39 year old applicant with relevant prior convictions and poor history of compliance with bail and other court orders charged with contraventions of family violence intervention orders, breaches of bail, driving while disqualified and other offences – applicant subject to a number of grants of bail at the time – alleged offending flagrant and repeated – bail not opposed by the respondent but it is a matter for the Court to determine if exceptional circumstances were established – likely sentence may be exceeded by the time on remand – substantial risk of reoffending – exceptional circumstances not established).
* *Re Gaper* [2022] VSC 287 (Taylor J-25 year old dyslexic applicant charged with multiple sexual offences, false imprisonment, reckless conduct endangering life and other offences – complainant a sexual partner of the applicant – applicant subject to two community correction orders at time of alleged offending and on summons for breaching both community correction orders – applicant respondent to two family violence intervention orders at time of alleged offending in which the protected person is a former sexual partner and has prior convictions for breaching family violence intervention orders – exceptional circumstances not made out – in addition a high risk of committing further offences which cannot be rendered acceptable by the imposition of bail conditions – bail refused).
* *Re Pusey* [2022] VSC 455 (Taylor J-44 year old applicant charged with using carriage service to offend and bail offences – no exceptional circumstances – in any event applicant is an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person and committing an offence whilst on bail – no condition of bail would render the risks presented by the applicant acceptable). See also *Re Pusey (No 2)* [2022] VSC 682.
* *Re Al-Qassim* [2022] VSC 576 (Champion J-21 year old applicant charged with aggravated home invasion with firearm, theft, assault with weapon, false imprisonment, armed robbery, intentionally cause injury, charges described as “grave in nature, multiple in number [and] were highly violent and frightening” – history of serious offending (including a home invasion for which he was sentenced in 2019 to a significant custodial outcome in a youth justice centre) and breaches of bail – availability of surety, employment and a 12 week outpatient drug treatment and rehabilitation program –– “The extent of the delay experienced by the applicant should also be considered against the potential outcome should he be found guilty of any or all of the offences with which he is charged” – exceptional circumstances not found – in any event applicant is an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail and of committing further offences on bail, constituting a risk to the safety of other persons – bail refused).
* *Re SH* [2022] VSC 584 (Champion J-52 year old applicant with a relevant criminal history and a significant mental health history, including charged with make threat to kill, carry a dangerous item in a public place, obtain property by deception, theft and commit an indictable offence on bail – applicant currently on summons in relation to 4 charges of contravening a personal safety intervention order and on bail in relation to 2 charges of stalking, 2 charges of using a postal service in a menacing, harassing or offensive way and 1 charge of possessing a weapon – exceptional circumstances not made out – in any event applicant is an unacceptable risk).
* *Re Pope* [2022] VSC 735(Priest JA-41 year old applicant charged with Schedule 1 offences of trafficking not less than a large commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, cocaine and pseudoephedrine – strong prosecution case involving a serious example of a serious offence – none of the matters relied upon by the applicant — including parity, delay, the availability of supervised bail and a substantial surety — alone or in combination amount to exceptional circumstances; that is, circumstances taking the case out of the normal so as to justify the admission of the applicant to bail notwithstanding the very serious nature of the charges against him – had exceptional circumstances been established, bail would still be refused on the basis that the applicant represents the unacceptable risks contended for by the respondent, such risks not being capable of acceptable amelioration by any conditions the court might impose).
* *Re Mirkovic* [2023] VSC 27 (Champion J-25 year old applicant charged with aggravated burglary, theft, obtaining property by deception, dishonestly receiving stolen goods, possessing a drug of dependence – criminal history – applicant subject to outstanding bench warrants in New South Wales – history of non-compliance with CCO – availability of bail support – delay not considered to be significant – strength of prosecution case – exceptional circumstances not found – in any event applicant an unacceptable risk – bail refused).
* *Re Karisson* [2023] VSC 45 (Tinney J-44 year old applicant with extensive criminal history – bail sought on eleven charges including two of trafficking a large commercial quantity of a drug of dependence – revocation of earlier grant of bail due to re-offending and failing to comply with curfew and other conditions - forfeiture of surety of $900,000 as a result of breaches – prosecution case of reasonable strength – trial listed to commence in 3½ months – serious offending – long term of imprisonment inevitable upon conviction – family supports and substantial surety failed to ensure compliance in past – exceptional circumstances not made out – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Cresswell* [2023] VSC 382 (Lasry J-29 year old applicant charged with discharge firearm at a vehicle, reckless conduct endangering life, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, intentionally cause serious injury, recklessly cause serious injury, assault, prohibited person use firearm, use firearm in contravention of a firearm prohibition order, commit indictable offence whilst on bail, contravene conduct condition of bail, possess drug of dependence, use unregistered motor vehicle and fraudulently use registration label – applicant had a relevant and extensive criminal history, including being on bail and on a CCO at the time of this alleged offending – notwithstanding the possibility of delay, exceptional circumstances not made out – bail refused).
* *Re Ridge* [2023] VSC 509 (Gorton J-31 year old applicant charged with 22 offences while on bail – in many of the offences the complainant was his ex defacto partner – although alleged offending not at the most serious end of the spectrum, the injuries sustained by his ex-partner were significant and were caused by the use of significant force and were associated with violent behaviour over a period of time – period of delay prior to contested hearing not excessive or likely significantly (if at all) to exceed any sentence imposed if convicted – exceptional circumstances test not met – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Ngoc Quoc Pham* [2023] VSC 585 (Tinney J-36 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of heroin and other charges – significant criminal history including some bail offences and breaches of court orders – availability of residential drug rehabilitation – whether any proven connection between drug addiction of applicant and current offending – language difficulties may impede proper treatment – surety, accommodation and employment available – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk – bail refused).
* *Re Moody* [2023] VSC 662 (Elliott J-37 year old applicant suffering from a recently diagnosed major depressive disorder charged with importing and possessing border controlled drugs and related charges – quantities far in excess of a “commercial quantity” – availability of surety – exceptional circumstances not made out – in any event an unacceptable risk – bail refused).
* *Re El-Leissy* [2023] VSC 767 (Elliott J-22 year old applicant with, on his own case, a serious drug addiction and with serious mental health issues and a relevant criminal history facing 19 charges including 3 charges of conduct endangering life, 2 charges of discharging a firearm at premises and 1 charge of possessing a firearm as a prohibited person – availability of support services, bail monitoring and a drug treatment and rehabilitation program – exceptional circumstances not made out – in any event an unacceptable risk of not answering bail – bail refused).
* *Re Hodgetts* [2024] VSC 21 (Tinney J-20 year old applicant facing a large number of driving and other charges in several groups – charges allegedly committed in breach of bail and CCO – poor performance on previous grants of bail – onerous conditions in custody – significant risk of reoffending – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Vicky McKay* [2024] VSC 59 (Niall JA-48 year old Yorta Yorta woman applicant charged with intentionally causing serious injury to the complainant whom she had met earlier in the day in the context of purchasing drugs – after the two returned to the applicant’s unit, the complainant went into a bedroom – the applicant became very agitated saying that it was the room of her late son – she became increasingly agitated and took up two kitchen knives and stabbed the complainant multiple times, causing serious injury to his abdomen and limbs requiring hospitalisation including a period in ICU – the applicant does not dispute stabbing the complainant and self-defence will be the critical issue at the trial listed for May 2024 – at the time of the alleged offending, the applicant was serving an 18 month CCO imposed in the County Court as part of a combined sentence that was imposed for intentionally causing injury and contravening a family violence intervention order by stabbing her then-partner multiple times with a knife – the applicant has a significant history of trauma, bereavement, substance dependence and homelessness, long-term problems with drugs including heroin and substantial mental health problems including records of depression, general and specific anxiety, and vulnerability to substance abuse – she also has a lamentable criminal history including 42 prior convictions for bail-related offending – given the seriousness of the charge and he expected time between now and trial exceptional circumstances not made out – given the applicant’s criminal history the risk of further offending and failure to answer bail would be unacceptable).
* *Re Naaman* [2024] VSC 118 (Elliott J–41 year old applicant with an extensive criminal history dating back to 1998 facing charges including trafficking a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine and trafficking cannabis – applicant relied on a number of factors to establish exceptional circumstances including, but not limited to, issues with the prosecution case, his special vulnerabilities, family support and stable accommodation, his history of compliance with bail conditions, the impact of delay in the proceeding and his offer of a $500,000 surety – Elliott J had “grave concerns about the circumstances in which this offer [of a surety] was made” – exceptional circumstances not established – further there was an unacceptable risk that if granted bail the applicant would endanger the safety or welfare of others or would commit an offence while on bail given his “ongoing lack of employment and his struggles with addiction [which] have persisted for many years” – bail refused).
* *Re Chau* [2024] VSC 387 (Elliott J-45 year old applicant with a significant criminal history was charged with murder and other charges – the applicant submitted that exceptional circumstances were established by a combination of (1) an alleged lack of strength of the prosecution case; (2) delay estimated at 683 days by the time of trial; (3) the availability of family support and stable accommodation; (4) the availability of employment; and (5) the offer of a $25,000 bail guarantee by the applicant’s sister – in holding that exceptional circumstances had not been made out, Elliott J held at [57] that “Ultimately the prosecution case is ‘not so lacking in strength as to form a separate basis (either looked at alone or in combination with the other surrounding circumstances) upon which one might conclude that exceptional circumstances have been made out’”: *Re Zayneh* [2023] VSC 470, [35]” – in any event Elliott J would have found that the applicant posed an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses or otherwise obstructing the course of justice – bail refused).
* *Re JP* [2024] VSC 691 (Elliott J-34 year old applicant charged with persistent contravention of family violence intervention order, alleged threats to kill and alleged strangulation – strong prosecution case – Schedule 2 offences alleged to have been committed while on bail for similar Schedule 2 offences involving the same complainant, the applicant’s former partner who has informed police that she is ‘petrified’ about the prospect of JP being released on bail – the complainant is scared that JP will turn up at her home, she doesn’t have the means to relocate and doesn’t want to interrupt the routine of her 3 children – applicant has a limited criminal history, including 2 priors for theft and 1 prior for failing to answer bail in 2023 but has no priors for family violence related offending – exceptional circumstances not established – unacceptable risk would have been established – bail refused).
* *Re Gatkuoth* [2025] VSC 5 (Judd J-27 year old applicant charged with attempted aggravated home invasion – notwithstanding support from CISP exceptional circumstances not made out – the proposed conditions insufficient to mitigate risk of offending to an acceptable level – bail refused).
* *Re Margus (Bail)* [2025] VSC 68 (Gorton J-27 year old applicant charged with 28 offences including trafficking methylamphetamine in not less than a large commercial quantity – strong evidence that a sophisticated drug trafficking business was being conducted by persons close to the applicant – the central issue at trial will be whether it can be proved that the applicant was involved in it or the extent to which he was involved in it or whether he intended to traffic ‘a large commercial quantity’ – significant prior criminal history – lengthy delay before trial but any sentence imposed if found guilty would likely be much longer – available surety of $200,000 is significant but relatively modest when compared to the scale of the alleged drug trafficking – availability of residential drug rehabilitation program at The Cottage would not ameliorate the risk of the applicant reoffending – exceptional circumstances not established – in any event an unacceptable risk – bail refused).
* *Re Cartledge* [2025] VSC 177 (Taylor JA-Aboriginal applicant charged with murder and arson causing death had been on remand for 771 days – the jury empanelled to hear the trial was discharged without verdict one month before following the failure of a major prosecution witness to answer a subpoena – the witness fled the jurisdiction but has been extradited to Victoria and has been admitted to bail on strict conditions to attend Court for the pre-recording of evidence in a month’s time – prosecution concession that the applicant does not pose an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person, interfering with a witness or failing to surrender into custody – exceptional circumstances not found – bail refused).
* *Re Alsowafi* [2025] VSC 162 (Beale J-whilst on parole and on bail for other matters the 24 year old applicant was charged with numerous driving offences in the course of a police pursuit, including driving at a speed and in a manner that was dangerous – it is alleged that he drove at speeds of over 150 km/h and on the wrong side of the road, placing other persons in grave danger – subsequently while on bail in relation to these charges he was charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of cocaine, being in possession of a loaded firearm, wearing body armour and intention to pervert the course of justice – residential placement at Odyssey House in Benalla available – trial dates listed in August and November 2025 – combination of circumstances relied on by applicant do not amount to exceptional circumstances – in any event applicant is an unacceptable risk of committing further offences and of endangering members of the public if released on bail – bail refused).

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### **9.4.1.3 SOME CASES IN WHICH EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WERE FOUND BUT BAIL WAS REFUSED BECAUSE ACCUSED WAS DEEMED AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK**

*KN (No.2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 490

The applicant was charged with robbery, attempted robbery and related offences which allegedly occurred while on bail on similar charges granted by Tinney J in [2020] VSC 35. The applicant was still assessed as suitable by Youth Justice for supervised bail. His Honour found exceptional circumstances but refused bail on the basis that the respondent had established unacceptable risk.

*Albert Biba*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Beale J]

[2020] VSC 536

The applicant was charged with murder and cultivating a commercial quantity of cannabis. He established exceptional circumstances but was found to be an unacceptable risk of absconding whilst on bail: *Barbaro v CDPP* (2009) 20 VR 717; [2009] VSCA 26 referred to.

*Benjamin Zohs*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-T Forrest JA]

[2020] VSC 827

The 29 year old applicant with a long standing history of illicit drug use was charged with aggravated burglary, theft and committing an indictable offence whilst on 2 separate grants of bail. Exceptional circumstances established by the applicant’s medical history (particularly his predisposition to pneumothoraces), his psychological history and the risks that are presented in confinement by the pandemic virus. However, bail was refused primarily on the basis of the applicant’s extensive prior criminal history and history of breaching supervisory orders, his Honour saying: “I cannot conceive of conditions that would ameliorate, to an acceptable level, the risk of committing further offences or the risk of failure to answer his bail.”

*Andrew James Price*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 31

The 47 year old applicant – who had some outstanding criminal matters but no prior convictions – was charged with “a particular serious offence of murder” in circumstances which might be described as a ‘romantic triangle’. Exceptional circumstances were established by a combination of factors, but principally relating to delay. However, the applicant was held to pose an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses.

*Shannon Taylor v DPP*

[Court of Appeal – Priest, T Forrest & Weinberg JJA] [2020] VSCA 142

On appeal from a refusal of bail by Lasry J [2020] VSC 146

The 31 year old appellant was charged with offences including trafficking in a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence, methylamphetamine; being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. Although Lasry J was satisfied that “exceptional circumstances have been established, primarily on the basis of the inordinate delay that will occur, along with the impact that COVID-19 is likely to have on the prison population”, he nonetheless refused bail because “there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant will continue to offend whilst on bail”: see [2020] VSC 146 at [51] & [54]. The remandee’s appeal on the unacceptable risk issue was dismissed.

*Re Kamvissis*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beale J]

[2021] VSC 620

The applicant was charged with trafficking in a large commercial quantity of cocaine and of methylamphetamine. Although Beale J was satisfied that exceptional circumstances had been shown based on “a delay from arrest to trial in the order of 3 years [being] very much on the cards”, bail was refused on there being “an unacceptable risk of flight if the applicant is released on bail”.

*Re Gentile (No 2)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2021] VSC 781

The 32 year old applicant was charged with false imprisonment, persistent contravention of intervention order, contravene intervention order in several ways, threat to kill, threat to inflict serious injury, intentionally cause injury, commit an indictable offence whilst on bail and contravention of a conduct condition of bail. Taylor J had refused an earlier application for bail – [2021] VSC 467 – holding that the applicant had failed to demonstrate exceptional circumstances and in any event that the applicant posed an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety and welfare of his ex-partner and committing an offence while on bail. New facts and circumstances – including acceptance into a 90-day residential treatment program – were conceded by respondent. Exceptional circumstances found but bail refused on the basis that the proposed residential treatment program followed by residence at his grandmother’s house does not sufficiently mitigate the risk he poses towards female family members.

*Re Nguyen-Huynh*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 791

The 50 year old applicant had a significant prior criminal history including IMP8y/5y in 2012 for trafficking in ±6kg of methamphetamine. He was charged with attempting to possess a commercial quantity of an unlawfully imported border controlled drug (±78kg methamphetamine with a street value of $16 million). At [41] Lasry J held that “a 3½ year delay from charge to trial coupled with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for the prison population, does amount to exceptional circumstances which justify the grant of bail”. However for the reasons detailed at [42], including the magnitude of the offending and the applicant’s prior convictions, his Honour refused bail holding that the risk of releasing the applicant on bail was unacceptable and he did not consider there were bail conditions he could impose which would make the risk acceptable.

*Re Stewart*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

[2022] VSC 245

The 27 year old applicant with a significant prior criminal history was charged with trafficking in a commercial quantity of methamphetamine and with firearms and bail offences. At [56] Priest JA held that given “the absence of any serious dispute by the respondent, and having regard principally to the anticipated delay in bringing the applicant’s charges to trial…the applicant has established the existence of exceptional circumstances that would justify the grant of bail.” However at [57] his Honour refused bail “since the respondent has persuaded me that there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant would, if released on bail, endanger the safety and welfare of persons; commit an offence while on bail; interfere with witnesses; or fail to surrender himself into custody”

*Re PM*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Niall JA]

[2022] VSC 421

The 13 year old applicant was the youngest of seven young people, aged between 13 & 17, charged with the murder of a 16 year old boy from another group. The eighth assailant has not been caught. The circumstances of the offending were summarised by Niall JA at [8]-[10] as follows:

“The deceased and his friends were at a party in Reservoir. They believed that one or more of the accused were coming to the party and they decided to leave. They armed themselves with kitchen knives before they left. The eight assailants arrived near the house in a stolen car. They came across the deceased who had become separated from his friends and attacked him. The fatal assault is captured on CCTV footage. Although taken in the dark of early morning, the footage is clear and chilling. It depicts a brutal, sustained attack involving each of the eight assailants. It appears seven of them are armed with bladed weapons, and a large knife can be seen in the hands of one of the attackers. The deceased is stabbed, kicked and stomped on. On the prosecution case, the applicant can be clearly seen in the footage. He is unarmed but an active participant in the attack.”

The applicant has no prior criminal history. The applicant was charged with a number of offences when he was between 11 and 12 years of age. These charges were withdrawn because the prosecution conceded it could not rebut the presumption of *doli incapax*. In addition to the charge of murder, the applicant faces a large number of outstanding charges brought by eight informants. The charges relate to events that occurred between January and March 2022. The charges span a range of alleged offending, including assaulting police by spitting, theft of a motor vehicle, theft, burglary, possession of a controlled weapon, dangerous driving and reckless conduct endangering serious injury.

After referring to *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] and *Re KA* [2022] VSC 277, Niall JA said at [23]-[24]:

“I am satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances that would justify a grant of bail. There are a number of factors that make the position of the applicant exceptional. They include the applicant’s youth, that he has the benefit of a legal presumption that he lacks the necessary intent to commit the offence, that he is vulnerable in detention, the risk of a deterioration in his mental health in custody, and the expected duration of remand. As will appear, most, if not all of the matters that make this application exceptional, elevate the risks of bail to an entirely unacceptable level.”

In holding that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of further offending and interfering with witnesses, Niall JA said at [25]-[29]:

“In assessing the risks that would arise in the event the applicant were bailed, it is necessary to take into account the nature and extent of the potential harm and of the likelihood of that harm being realised. Plainly, the extreme nature of the alleged offending, which occurred in a context of ongoing animosity and hostility, in an environment where recourse to knives and other weapons was apparently routine, affects both the gravity of the risk and the likelihood of further offending in the event bail is granted.

It is sufficiently plain on the current material, that the applicant lacks the maturity, insight and ability to adequately control his own behaviour. That is a function of his age and stage of development. It is not a moral judgment. Before he was remanded he had lost contact with his school and he was engaged in highly dangerous behaviour in company with others. It is also of significant concern that the applicant was on bail at the time of the alleged offence, having been released from a youth justice centre on 11 March 2022, just two days before the fatal attack. The strictures of bail do not seem to have dampened his anti-social behaviour.

For the purposes of the present application, I am satisfied that the applicant was present at the time of the incident and was physically involved in the assault to some degree. The nature and extent of the brutality involved was extreme. Left unsupervised, the applicant presents a very high risk of reoffending in a very serious way. The defences raised by the applicant to undermine the prosecution case on the murder charge, namely *doli incapax* and lack of complicity, while relevant to criminal liability, do little to assuage my concerns about the applicant’s conduct and the risk he poses.

Recorded telephone calls between the applicant and other persons that he has made since being on remand are also highly revealing of the applicant’s outlook. The applicant has made telephone calls to his nine year old sister and arranged for her to merge the calls to allow the applicant to speak with people who are not on his phone list. In one call he discusses a witness ’snitching’ and refers to the witness in a hostile manner. In other calls in June 2022, he refers to ‘going to do a burg’ if he is released and being provided with a car. The language he uses is juvenile but redolent of further offending.

The question then is whether those endogenous risks can be adequately addressed by the community supports that are proposed. I conclude that they cannot.”

*Re Zayneh*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Beach JA]

[2023] VSC 470

The 39 year old applicant with a limited criminal history was one of 7 co-accused charged in July 2021 with conspiring to import 1.6 tonnes of border controlled drugs. He has been on remand since then. His Honour found at [36] that exceptional circumstances were made out by delay. However bail was refused on the basis that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of not answering bail. Beach JA said at [41]:

“In many cases, undertakings, sureties, bail conditions and the other matters advanced by the applicant in this case would collectively be sufficient to make the risks referred to in s 4E(1)(a) of the Act acceptable. In this case, however, the respondent has persuaded me that notwithstanding all of the matters proffered and advanced by the applicant, a grant of bail to him would still involve an unacceptable risk of the applicant failing to surrender into custody in accordance with any grant of bail that might be made to him. A person with the resources the applicant appears to possess can easily flee the jurisdiction without the need for any passport that might have been surrendered. The amounts involved in the applicant’s alleged offending suggests that forfeited sureties might be of little moment to the applicant: cf. *Re Kamvissis* [2021] VSC 620, [31] (Beale J). Moreover, electronic monitoring would likely pose little problem for a person as well-resourced as the applicant appears to be and who would likely prefer to avoid the possibility of a very long period of incarceration following a trial for offending which is alleged to be extremely serious: cf. *Re Biba* [2020] VSC 536, [36] (Beale J).”

An appeal by the applicant was dismissed: see *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 which is summarised in **subsection 9.5.9.2** below. In a subsequent bail application the applicant was granted bail on extremely stringent conditions: see *Re Zayneh (No 2)* [2024] VSC 374 which is summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.1** above.

*Re FT*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Elliott J]

[2024] VSC 158

The 14 year old applicant was charged with aggravated burglary, theft of a motor vehicle and failing to stop after an accident. Although he had no prior convictions at the time of this alleged offending on 28/02/2024, FT was on bail in respect of charges of reckless conduct placing a person in danger of death, causing serious injury intentionally, failure to report to police whereby a person was injured and theft of a motor vehicle. He was also on bail granted by police in respect of 4 other charges (including theft of a motor vehicle) and was the subject of summonses in relation to 9 further charges. The applicant had the support of Youth Justice Bail Support Services.

When FT was 6 years old his parents had relinquished custody of him. In May 2023 his foster parents formed the view that they could no longer control FT and his increasingly aggressive behaviours. FT was placed on a care by Secretary order and resided in a residential care unit. Between 31/05/2023 & 27/02/2024 FT was reported as a ‘missing person’ on 46 occasions.

On 07/03/2024 FT’s mother visited FT and his brother in custody at the MYJC and expressed concern about the apparent lack of remorse displayed by them following comments to the effect that as soon as they were released from custody they would continue to steal cars. The following day FT’s case manager informed police of these concerns. Although this evidence was ‘second hand or more remote hearsay’ it was not challenged. FT has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and is the recipient of a NDIS plan. He has also been diagnosed with ADHD and is prescribed medication which he is required to take daily. He also suffers from PTSD. The respondent conceded that exceptional circumstances had been established and that a submission concerning delay was available to FT given the nature of the offending and his age. However the prosecution submitted that FT presented an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety and welfare of any person or committing an offence while on bail.

On 21/03/2024 Elliott J held that the risk was not unacceptable if bail was granted for 1 week on strict conditions – including the requirement that FT not leave his residential care facility unless in the company of an approved delegate of Youth Justice or the Care Provider – and granted bail accordingly. Bail was only granted up to 10.00am on 28/03/2024.

At a scheduled bail monitoring hearing on 25/03/2024 an affidavit was filed containing a report that staff of the Care Provider had reported a breach of bail the previous evening that FT was observed outside the front door of his residence using cannabis in the company of his co-resident. The prosecution did not apply to revoke bail at that time.

However, FT allegedly left his residence without approval at 12.40am on 27/03/2024 and allegedly entered a stolen vehicle which was followed by police and was estimated to be travelling at speeds in excess of 150kph. Traffic spikes were deployed by police and the vehicle came to a forced stop shortly thereafter. Five persons were observed running from the vehicle. FT and 3 other co-accused were arrested a short time later, while a further co-accused was seen running from the vehicle but was subsequently unable to be located by police. In what appears to be a further breach of bail, an alleged occupant of the stolen vehicle is a co-accused specified in the conditions of bail as being a person with whom FT was not to have any direct or indirect contact.

In refusing bail on 28/03/2024, Elliott J said at [85]-[95] (emphasis added):

[85] “Having considered all the relevant circumstances, including the surrounding circumstances in section 3AAA (as amended) and the matters specified in section 3B(1) (as amended), I am again satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. However, I am also satisfied that the prosecution has established that FT poses an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of others such that the application for a further grant of bail must be refused. Without being exhaustive, there are numerous matters that give rise to this conclusion.

[86] Notwithstanding factors including FT’s young age, vulnerabilities and lack of criminal history, I do not accept the submission made on behalf of FT that it is unlikely FT will receive a term of imprisonment if he is found guilty of the more serious offences with which he has been charged. **I also reject the contention that there is no evidence that the most recent alleged misconduct gave rise to any risk of endangering the safety or welfare of others in the community. The nature and seriousness of the alleged offending is extremely concerning. Each time a child steals and drives a car, that child is putting everyone in the vicinity of that vehicle in grave danger of serious injury, if not death. This danger is highly likely to be elevated even further when a group of children collectively decide to engage in such activities.** Serious injuries have already occurred in relation to some of the alleged offending. It is only good fortune that there have not been other serious injuries or deaths. If FT is found guilty of repeatedly engaging in this conduct of his own volition and without any sense of guilt or remorse (as appears to be his present state of mind), then it may be expected that he will face a sentence involving incarceration for a not insignificant period of time: see also *Children, Youth and Families Act*, ss.362, 362A & 362B.

[87] It is estimated that the period of delay in the matter proceeding to hearing is in the order of 6 to 9 months. Mindful of the observations in *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [63]-[64], for the reasons stated in the preceding paragraph, in my view the refusal of bail in the serious circumstances of this case could not be properly characterised as a form of preventative detention. Further, FT being held on remand for at least the next 21 days is a step taken as a last resort after repeated efforts to minimise FT’s involvement in the criminal justice system.

[88] Furthermore, on the evidence presently before the court, the prosecution has a strong case. On more than 1 occasion, FT was seen or filmed either in or within the vicinity of the stolen vehicle in question on 28/02/2024. His alleged involvement is corroborated by the fact he is apparently willing to boast about such matters. Although I accept the submission made on FT’s behalf about the inability to test the evidence about what is alleged to have been said by FT and his brother while in custody, the uncontested evidence is before the court and is corroborated by the conduct of FT in allegedly repeatedly offending when released on bail (including at least most recently with alacrity).

[89] While FT does not have a criminal history, the offending conduct has allegedly now been engaged in repeatedly over a period of months. **The absence of a criminal history cannot equate to a right to obtain bail, even for a child, if refusal is otherwise mandated by the *Bail Act* because FT is an unacceptable risk and all reasonably possible attempts to alleviate that risk have failed.**

[90] With respect to non-compliance with conditions of earlier grants of bail, such non‑compliance has been repeated if not incessant. From my own observations with respect to the events of the last week, it is difficult to form any view other than that FT has little, if any, regard to the seriousness of breaching conditions of bail. In short, it must be considered highly likely that if FT were granted bail again he would materially breach the conditions of bail almost immediately.

[91] The history set out above shows that FT was both on bail for other offences and subject to summonses to answer for charges of other offences at the time of the further alleged offending on 27/03/2024. These matters are far from determinative, but also weigh in favour of the court being satisfied an unacceptable risk has been established.

[92] It is without controversy that the personal circumstances, lack of home environment and background of FT are extremely unfortunate. This of itself has given rise to special vulnerabilities, which are exacerbated by FT's developmental delay and cognitive issues. In this regard, recent events have demonstrated a lack of maturity on the part of FT. However, the evidence, including exchanges that have taken place before me, indicate that FT properly understands the wrongful nature of his conduct.

[93] It is noted that bail support services are available. However, it must be further noted that these bail support services have been available on previous occasions and have not resulted in any satisfactory outcome with respect to compliance. Indeed, despite the best efforts of bail support services and others, nothing has prevented serious breaches of conditions of bail on numerous occasions.

[94] To reiterate, it has been demonstrated to a high degree of probability that FT poses an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of other persons, including by committing offences, if he were to be granted bail again.

[95] Despite being given repeated opportunities to address the very serious risk he poses to the community, FT has chosen not to take advantage of these opportunities. Unless the Secretary [DFFH] were to make an application to have FT the subject of bail conditions that included an inability for FT to depart from a secure facility, presently the unacceptable risk he poses compels the court to refuse bail.”

An appeal by the applicant was dismissed: see *FT (a pseudonym) v The King* [2024] VSCA 90 which is summarised in **subsection 9.5.9.2** below.

*Re EP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2024] VSC 827

The 17 year old applicant EP was charged with dangerous driving causing serious injury, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, theft of a motor vehicle, failure to stop after an accident resulting in serious injury and driving as a learner without an appropriate supervisor driver. EP had driven a stolen vehicle on the wrong side of the road, colliding head-on with another vehicle. A 13 year old female who was one of the 5 passengers in the vehicle suffered paralysis from the chest down. Although EP had no prior convictions at the time of this alleged offending on 27/09/2024, he was on bail or summons for several other matters involving, *inter alia*, aggravated burglary, aggravated home invasion, theft of a motor vehicle and arson said to have occurred in August and September 2024. Bail had been refused by the Children’s Court in October 2024 and November 2024.

If granted bail it was proposed that EP would reside at his family home with his mother and six siblings although he is a respondent to a limited intervention order where his brother is the affected family member. EP relied on a combination of factors, including–

* his age and family support;
* he had no criminal history, no prior dispositions relating to the commission of offences on bail and he had never been subject to court-imposed bail;
* delay;
* parity with 4 children in the car – EH aged 13, PT aged 14, PH aged 16 and NH aged 15 – some of whom had prior convictions and pending charges and 3 of whom were on pre-existing grants of bail in respect of serious charges involving violence, armed robbery and associated types of offences;
* a Bail Service Report from Youth Justice that recommended EP be admitted to supervised bail and whose recommendations took into account his improved attitude throughout the supervised bail assessment, his display of willingness to adhere to the Youth Justice Supervised Bail program, his agreement to engage with support services including Youth Justice community support service, AXIS employment and the Salvation Army, acceptance of a referral to Thrive Wellness and Consulting for counselling and his supportive family.

Describing the application at [33] as “finely balanced and the resolution of it has given the Court great concern” and saying at [35] that “[a]t the heart of this application is that the applicant is a child”, Champion J at [51] found exceptional circumstances “[i]n all the circumstances, and taking into account all the matters put on the applicant’s behalf, and particularly his young age and vulnerabilities”.

However, ultimately his Honour refused bail on the basis of unacceptable risk, saying at [56]-[60]:

[56] “Taking all matters into account, in my opinion, the applicant poses a considerable risk for the reasons argued by the respondent. This is particularly so given the frequency of his alleged criminal conduct in the period leading up to the current offending. He is alleged to have committed many serious offences, involving violence and aggravated burglaries. He was on bail for many of these matters and, in the face of the constraints imposed by those bail orders, the evidence suggests that he was the driver of vehicle that he drove dangerously, resulting in very serious outcomes.

[57] In relation to the risk the applicant allegedly poses to members of the public, this risk is clearly apparent. There appears to be a very troubling escalation in the seriousness of his alleged offending conduct in the period leading up to the current offending. A number of these instances of alleged offending occurred in disparate areas around outside Melbourne, suggesting a significant lack of supervision of a 17-year-old, as well as an attitude in defiance of authorities imposing bail outcomes.

[58] Despite the supervision offered by Youth Justice, and other possible agencies, in light of his history, in my opinion there will remain a risk the applicant will continue to offend. In my view, the degree of actual supervision offered borders on being superficial. The matter for consideration is whether what I believe to be the unacceptability of the risk can be ameliorated by the imposition of conditions, to a level that becomes acceptable in all the circumstances. It is not a question of the elimination of all risk.

[59] In resolving this application, I have also carefully taken into account the special position young people have in the criminal justice system and the need to place emphasis on the principle of rehabilitation. However, these special circumstances must be properly weighed along with the matter of risk.

[60] Ultimately, for the reasons set out by the respondent, I consider that the conditions put forward, and the support the applicant can have provided to him, are not sufficiently capable, even in combination, to reduce the risk of further offending to an acceptable level; this risk being that he will commit further offences of a serious kind. In all the circumstances, I am not prepared to accept that the degree of risk the applicant poses can be satisfactorily managed even with the imposition of strict bail conditions, and available supports.”

In relation to the issue of ‘parity’ Champion J said at [46]-[47]:

“The applicant…is the oldest of the group, but at the same time has no criminal history. I have taken the question of parity of treatment into account. I understand that the applicant may feel a sense of grievance in circumstances where his application may be refused, and others who were involved in the events are not remanded in custody. On the other hand, the applicant was the driver of the vehicle and to that extent was in control of the circumstances of its driving. It might be reasonably concluded that he bears a considerable degree of responsibility for the events that happened.”

*Re Nguyen*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Gorton J]

[2025] VSC 179

The 28 year old applicant who had previously complied with bail and has no criminal record was charged with cultivating and trafficking not less than a commercial quantity of cannabis and other related offences. The charges followed the informant finding the applicant present at a large and sophisticated cannabis nursery in a factory in Braeside The applicant’s wife has depression and he and his wife have a toddler and a newborn. Time on remand will likely exceed the likely non-parole period but not the sentence if the allegations are proved. A surety was offered to the Court and the applicant has an opportunity of employment. Exceptional circumstances found. However, the applicant had made false statements in visa and other applications, has no legal right to work or connections to Victoria and access to false identity documentation. Unacceptable risk that applicant will fail to surrender into custody or will commit offences if granted bail. Bail refused.

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### **9.4.2 Show compelling reason (previously show cause) / Unacceptable risk**

In a case which falls within s.4C of the **BA**, the burden is on the accused to **show a compelling reason** why his or her detention in custody is not justified. It is now clear from ss.4D & 4E that if the bail decision maker is satisfied that a compelling reason exists that justifies the grant of bail for a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence, the bail decision maker must nevertheless refuse bail if satisfied by the prosecution that there is an **unacceptable risk** that the accused, if released on bail, would–

* endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or
* interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or
* fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail.

In *Re Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 the 49 year old accused – who had a criminal history going back to 1993 which included failing to answer bail and failing to comply with a CCO and who in 2001 when faced with serious fraud charges had used a false passport to flee to Turkey and had not returned to Australia until 2007 – was charged with fraudulently inducing persons to invest money, obtaining property by deception (7 charges), negligently dealing with the proceeds of crime (6 charges), making a false document (13 charges), possessing methylamphetamine, possessing cannabis and committing an indictable offence while on bail. He had been on remand for just over 3 months. At the time he was arrested he was on bail for another indictable offence, possessing methylamphetamine. Beach JA refused bail, holding at [53] that the applicant had not shown compelling reason why his detention in custody was not justified. His Honour also held at [54] that there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant, if released on bail, would commit further offences while on bail. In relation to the applicant’s submission on delay, Beach JA said at [51]:

“The potential for delay in this case is plainly less than desirable, and not at all satisfactory. Every effort needs to be made by the prosecution to ensure that delay is kept to a minimum. I would not foreclose the possibility of an inordinate delay at some point down the track tipping the balance in favour of the applicant being released on bail. That said, the current prospective delay is not such as to show compelling reason why the applicant, with his history, should be released on bail.”

At [37]-[44] Beach JA discussed dicta of Crennan J in *Paduano v Minister for Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs* (2005) 143 FCR 204 at [31], [32] & [37]-[39], of the Full Court of the Federal Court in *Babicci v Minister for Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs* (2005) 141 FCR 285 at [21]-[24], of the High Court in *Plaintiff M64/2015 v Minister for Immigration & Border Protection* (2015) 258 CLR 173 at 187-188 & 197, of Ashley and Priest JJA in *Gul v The Queen* [2017] VSCA 153 at [48] and of Weinberg, Whelan & Priest JJA in *DPP v Hudgson* [2016] VSCA 153 on the meaning of the words and phrases ‘compel’, ‘compelling’, ‘compelling reasons’, ‘substantial and compelling reasons’ and ‘substantial and compelling circumstances’ in various other pieces of legislation. At [46]-[47] Beach JA concluded:

“[46] It is well established that exceptional circumstances within the meaning of [s.4A] of the Act may, in an appropriate case, consist of a combination of a number of circumstances relating both to the strength of the prosecution case against the applicant and the personal circumstances of the applicant. **Similarly, an inquiry under [s.4C] as to whether an accused shows compelling reason why his or her detention in custody is not justified is an inquiry that involves a consideration of all of the relevant circumstances including the strength of the prosecution case and the history and personal circumstances of the accused.** When one takes account of all of the matters required to be taken into account in a particular application, the question becomes whether there is compelling reason why the particular applicant’s detention is not justified. **For an applicant to show ‘compelling reason’, a synthesis or balancing of all relevant matters must compel the conclusion that the applicant’s detention in custody is not justified.**

[47] While one must be careful not to substitute other expressions for the language used in the Act, **compelling reason** would likely be shown if there existed forceful, and therefore convincing, reason showing that, in all the circumstances, the continued detention of the applicant in custody was not justified [See cases of *Paduano* & *Plaintiff M64/2015*.] It is not, however, necessary for an applicant required to show compelling reason, to show a reason which is irresistible or exceptional. Such a requirement would place the bar at too high a level in a scheme where the exceptional circumstances test exists as the most onerous test under the Act…While again one should guard against substituting the statutory language, in terms of responsibility, **‘compelling reason’ in [s.4C] of the Act might appropriately be described as reason which is difficult to resist.**”

This test was approved by the Court of Appeal in *Rodgers v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 214 at [43]:

“(1) For an applicant for bail required to show a compelling reason, a synthesis or balancing of all relevant matters (including those identified in s.3AAA) must compel the conclusion that the applicant’s detention in custody is not justified.

(2) It is not, however, necessary for an applicant required to show a compelling reason, to show a reason which is irresistible or exceptional.

(3) A compelling reason is one which is forceful and therefore convincing – a reason which is ‘difficult to resist’: *Re Alsulayhim* [2018] VSC 570 [27]-[28] (Beach JA); see also *Re Ceylan* [2018] VSC 361 (Beach JA).”

As Riordan J noted in *Re Kurt Gaylor* [2019] VSC 46 at [15] in the course of applying the above test enunciated by Beach JA in *Re Ceylan*:

“The statutory provisions which were applied in *Re Ceylan* were subsequently amended on 1 July 2018, 3 September 2018 and 1 October 2018. However, the current provisions were considered by Beach JA in the recent bail decision of *Re Alsulayhim* [2018] VSC 570. As to the impact of the intervening amendments to the Act he held at [28]-[29]:

‘While the statutory language is slightly different, the expression ‘compelling reason’ remains. Having considered s.4C in context, there is no reason to depart from the analysis or holding in Ceylan concerning the proper construction of the expression “compelling reason”…Put shortly, the applicant in the present case, if he is to be successful, must establish a compelling reason (in the sense of a reason that is forceful and therefore convincing) that justifies the grant of bail.’”

In *Re TS* [2024] VSC 164 the 16 year old child applicant who had no prior convictions was charged with intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence and 9 other offences. Prior to being remanded in custody, he lived with his mother and three siblings in their family home. This was his first time in custody. At the time of his alleged offending, the applicant was on bail in respect of 3 other sets of alleged offences and on summons for a driving offence. Applying dicta of the Court of Appeal in *Rodgers v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 214 at [43] Beach JA found that a compelling reason exists that justifies the grant of bail, saying at [29]-[32]:

[29] “Having considered all of the circumstances of this case (including the matters set out in s 3AAA and the issues referred to in s 3B), I am satisfied that a compelling reason exists that justifies the grant of bail in this case. While I do not accept the submission that, if the applicant is not granted bail then (in the event he is convicted), the time he would spend on remand would exceed the possible sentence, the critical factors in the applicant’s favour on the compelling reason test are his age (being a child); his lack of prior convictions; the extent of family support (specifically from his mother); the favourable Youth Justice Bail Service Report; the support Youth Justice is prepared to provide; and the detailed program prepared by Youth Justice for the applicant in the event he is granted bail.

[30] While the very serious nature of the allegations made against the applicant (including the escalation in his alleged offending between November 2023 and February 2024) are matters that tell against the existence of a compelling reason justifying a grant of bail, I have ultimately concluded that, when synthesised with all of the other circumstances of the case, a compelling reason justifying a grant of bail has been established.

[31] If the applicant had been an adult at the time he is alleged to have committed the offending constituting charges 1 to 7, there would be little to be said in his favour on the compelling reason test. As the provisions of the Act make plain, however, {and in particular s. 3B(1)} the applicant’s status as a child weighs heavily in his favour. As has been said before, children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act: see *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438; *Re KA* [2022] VSC 277. Specifically, any assessment of the compelling reason test in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1) and the issues set out therein. In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting a compelling reason justifying a grant of bail, while the same combination, when considered in the case of a child, may achieve a wholly different outcome.

[32] More specifically, as has also been said before, the community’s interest in taking a child out of detention (with all the downside that the detention of a child by the criminal justice system entails) is a matter of great importance: *Re KA* [2022] VSC 277, [33]. The detrimental effects of detention on a young person to that person and to the wider community are well known. As the Act mandates, the remand of a child is a course of last resort: see s.3B(1)(b). Every possible step that can reasonably be taken to avoid the detrimental effects of the detention of a child, in the proper application of the Act and more generally, should be taken. It is with these considerations in mind that I have been persuaded that a compelling reason justifying a grant of bail exists in this case.”

In granting bail on stringent conditions, Beach JA stated at [34]-[36]:

[34] “The critical issue so far as this bail application is concerned is whether the respondent has established that, if the applicant is released on bail, there is an unacceptable risk that he would endanger the safety or welfare of any other person: see s.4E(1)(a)(i) of the Act…

[35] The fact that the applicant is alleged to have engaged in such serious offending after having been granted bail on two occasions (5 July 2023 and 21 January 2024) is of considerable concern, as is the escalation in the seriousness of the applicant’s alleged offending and its brazenness. That said, I am not persuaded that there do not exist conditions (albeit stringent ones) which I can impose on a grant of bail which would make an otherwise unacceptable risk acceptable.

[36] Put more positively, in circumstances where I am able to impose stringent conditions on a grant of bail (including judicial monitoring), the respondent has not persuaded me that, if released on bail, the risk that the applicant would endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, is an unacceptable risk. While history shows that circumstances can change and such assessments may have to be revisited {see, for example, *Re KA* [2022] VSC 277 and *Re KA (No 2)* [2022] VSC 363}, I am currently not persuaded that the risk which the applicant poses if released on bail is unacceptable in all of the circumstances as I have explained them.”

TS having failed to appear on a judicial monitoring hearing, having missed all his Youth Justice appointments and having failed to live at home for the past 3 weeks, Beach JA subsequently revoked bail: see *Re TS (No 2)* [2024] VSC 218.

In *Re Troon; Re Thorne* [2024] VSC 607 the applicants were co-accused aged 31 & 26 facing multiple charges including home invasion, intentionally cause serious injury, reckless conduct endangering life, aggravated burglary with a firearm, armed robbery and common law assault. The applicant Troon had family support, stable accommodation and no criminal history. The applicant Thorne had a lengthy criminal history and limited supports. Walker JA granted Mr Troon bail, holding that he had shown a compelling reason and that he was not an unacceptable risk of offending. Her Honour refused Mr Thorne bail, holding that he had not shown a compelling reason and that he was an unacceptable risk of reoffending.

### **9.4.2.1 How does an accused show compelling reason (show cause)**

In *Re Mustafa Tilki* [2003] VSC 483 at [11] Warren CJ commented that there seem to be few authorities as to how the question of showing cause should be approached, most of the authorities relating to cases where exceptional circumstances were required to be made out. Her Honour cited with approval from *DPP v Harika* where at [60]-[64] Gillard J discussed the concept of **showing cause**:

"[60] In determining the issue of cause, it is necessary, at the outset, to identify the factors which led the Legislature to decree that bail should be refused. What those factors are, will depend upon the circumstances of each case.

[61] The relevant factors on the application by the respondent were, first, a weapon had been used during the commission of the alleged offence, which showed a propensity to resort to violence; secondly, the presence of the weapon provided the potential to cause serious physical and/or mental injury to a victim; thirdly, the probabilities are high that upon conviction, the respondent would be sentenced to a substantial term of imprisonment which may encourage him not to answer bail; and finally, there is a risk of the commission of another similar-type offence.

[62] These seem to me to be the relevant factors which underpin the decision by the Legislature to refuse bail where a person, in the commission of an indictable offence, uses an offensive weapon. There may be other factors which would be relevant.

[63] The respondent, as an applicant for bail, had to provide cogent evidence to answer these concerns before it could be said that his detention in custody was not justified. In considering the factors, the background of the respondent, his prior convictions, the strength of the case against him, and the history of previous grants of bail, were all relevant.

[64] His detention would not be justified if it was established that the risk of repeat offending was extremely remote, that the case against him was weak, that the probabilities were that he would not be sentenced to a term of imprisonment, that the use of violence was completely out of character, and that the possibility of re‑offending, using a weapon, was remote. In considering the issue of cause, it is necessary to consider the applicant's past in making an assessment of whether he should be detained."

See also *DPP v Haidy* {aka *Vasailley*} [2004] VSC 247 where Redlich J said at [8]:

"In circumstances such as the present, Parliament has prescribed that where an indictable offence has allegedly been committed whilst on bail for an indictable offence, the onus rests upon the Applicant to show cause why he should not be detained in custody. See for example: *DPP v Parker* [1994] MC 166 per Mandie J; *R v Buckle* [2003] VSC 352; *DPP v Tilki* [2003] VSC 483. In *DPP v Harika* [2001] VSC 237 at [60-66] Justice Gillard explored the circumstances which might give rise to establishing sufficient cause."

In *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [51] Bell J said:

“By the express terms of s 4(4)(a)-(d), the onus of showing cause is on the applicant: *DPP v Harika* [2001] VSC 237, [41] (Gillard J); *Haidy* [2004] VSC 247, [8] (Redlich J); *Asmar* [2005] VSC 487, [11] (Maxwell P). **Again the precise nature of that onus has not yet been explored. As with exceptional circumstances, the considerations which may be relevant to showing cause are not specified. Each case must be assessed according to its own facts and circumstances.** A particular factor or (more usually) a combination of factors may result in an accused showing cause: *Harika* [2001] VSC 237, [47] (Gillard J).”

A good illustration of **showing cause** can be seen in the judgment of Croucher J in *MA v EM* [2014] VSC 11. In that case, the 16 year old applicant who had a mild intellectual disability had initially been bailed several times on successive sets of charges of dishonesty and driving offences. He had pleaded guilty to those charges in the Children’s Court and sentence had been deferred. During the deferral period he had been charged with further offences of theft from cars, theft of petrol and unlicensed driving allegedly committed while on bail. At [12] Croucher J said that the informant opposed bail on the grounds that MA was an unacceptable risk of committing further offences but-

“…conceded that MA had ‘shown cause’, particularly given his youth and lack of prior convictions. In light of those and other factors, I accept that concession. The other factors include the fact that MA’s intellectual disability is still under investigation and the fact that, were he found guilty of the new charges, it is extremely unlikely that MA would receive a custodial sentence let alone be sentenced to a term of more than the 20 days he had already spent in custody. Further, also relevant to whether cause had been shown were the matters to be discussed [in relation to the issue of unacceptable risk].”

In *Re Rodgers [No 2]* [2019] VSC 760 the 34 year old applicant who had no prior criminal history was charged with 33 offences against his wife and her children. He was required to show a **compelling reason** for granting bail. He had been refused bail in the Ballarat Magistrates’ Court and by Tinney J on appeal: see *Re Rodgers* [2019] VSC 553. His appeal to the Court of Appeal had been refused: see *Re Rodgers* [2019] VSCA 214. Subsequently he had refused summary jurisdiction and consequently his trial which had been anticipated in about January 2020 was unlikely to be listed before October 2020. Beach JA granted bail, holding at [30]:

“There are matters in the surrounding circumstances that do not tell in the applicant’s favour. These matters have been referred to before and include the seriousness of the allegations of strangulation and the fact that the complainant is afraid of the applicant and does not want him released on bail. Having synthesised all of the relevant circumstances — including those enumerated in s 3AAA of the Act — I have come to the conclusion, however, that the applicant has now established a compelling reason justifying the grant of bail. The lack of a negative bail history, the modesty of the applicant’s criminal history, his personal circumstances, his financial circumstances to which extensive reference has already been made in the earlier reasons for judgment, the time he has already spent in custody, the period of any likely sentence and the material and recommendations in the CROP report, taken together, in my view establish a compelling reason justifying why the applicant should now be granted bail.”

The cases discussed in paragraphs 9.4.1.1 and 9.4.3 in which the applicant succeeded in showing exceptional circumstances are also of general relevance to the issue of showing a compelling reason, since in some respects the issues overlap and the "hurdle" is higher in the exceptional circumstances category.

### **9.4.2.2 SOME CASES IN WHICH COMPELLING REASON (CAUSE) WAS SHOWN AND BAIL WAS GRANTED**

*Michael Kanfouche*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Smith J, unreported, 04/04/1991]

Notwithstanding that the Crown case was very strong, his Honour found that the applicant had shown cause by the following factors in combination, though none of them alone would have sufficed:

* the applicant would have been in custody for 12 months before a trial had taken place;
* the serious state of the applicant's health; and
* the applicant's lack of English.

An appeal to the Appeal Division was dismissed.

*Phillip Michael Groch*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coldrey J, unreported, 13/06/1996]

The applicant was in a show cause situation, having been charged with stalking and having priors for violence within the last 10 years. His Honour found that cause was shown by a combination of matters including the applicant's first job prospect for 5 years and permanent accommodation. His Honour was also satisfied that the imposition of conditions prohibiting the applicant from attending at the complainant's address and requiring him to abstain from alcohol minimised the risk of re-offending.

*R v Ilsley*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Williams J]

[2003] VSC 332

The applicant was in a show cause situation, having been charged with an offence of aggravated burglary involving use of a firearm and with cultivation of a narcotic plant. He had been in custody for more than 12 months. It was common ground that the DNA testing would delay the applicant's trial until approximately 2 years after his arrest. At [9]-[15] her Honour discussed a number of delay cases: *R v Medici* [Supreme Court of Victoria, Ashley J, unreported, 27/07/1993], *R v Alexopoulos* [Supreme Court of Victoria, Hampel J, {MC15/98}, 23/02/1998], *R v Kantzidis* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Smith J, unreported, 09/08/1996], *R v Mantase* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Vincent J, unreported, 21/09/2000], *R v Cox* [2003] VSC 245 per Redlich J, *Mokbel v DPP* [2002] VSC 127, *Mokbel v DPP (No. 2)* [2002] VSC 312 & *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)* [2002] VSC 393 per Kellam J and *YSA v DPP* [2002] VSCA 149 per Phillips, Chernov & Vincent JJA. At [16] her Honour concluded that "the authorities referred to establish that a delay of two years between arrest and trial might, in combination with other factors, in the context of a particular case, constitute the requisite exceptional circumstances." Her Honour went on to hold at [17] & [24] that cause was shown by delay and by the availability of a permanent place of residence and at [32] that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk of failing to appear. In relation to housing her Honour said at [24]: "The availability of a permanent place of residence [his parents' home] was of some significance in the determination of whether the applicant had shown cause why his detention is not justified. His situation compared favourably with that of an applicant not assured of accommodation."

*Jason Ghiller*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Eames J]

[2000] VSC 435

This was a high profile case, the accused being said to have committed the offences in the company of his uncle Debs, who was subsequently charged with the murder of police officers Silk & Miller. The DPP appealed against a grant of bail to the accused who had been charged with a series of armed robberies and with attempted murder and intentionally causing serious injury. The magistrate had found that cause was shown by a combination of factors:

* age of accused at time of alleged offences (15 to 18) cf. his age at time of application (24);
* absence of priors or allegations of subsequent offending;
* delay;
* strong family ties, permanent address and employment.

His Honour held that the magistrate was not manifestly in error in determining that these factors discharged the onus and in concluding the accused was not an unacceptable risk of absconding. The appeal was dismissed.

*Williamson v DPP (Qld)*

[Court of Appeal, Queensland]

[1999] QCA 356

The applicant had been charged with armed robbery with violence in company. The victim, a 63 year old widow, arrived home to find two men had broken into her house. She was threatened with violence and had a pillow slip placed over her head and tightened. The applicant and his co-offender remained in the house for an hour. They left the victim tied up when they left taking her possessions in her car. The applicant was refused bail in the Supreme Court of Queensland and appealed to the Court of Appeal. The appeal was allowed for the following reasons at [23]:

"…[O]n the whole of the evidence placed before the court, including the appellant's former successful responses to bail, the very tenuous nature of the suspicion that he might re-offend before he is tried and the disincentives against re-offending that are provided by the proposed grant including the requirement of a substantial surety, the finding that there is an unacceptable risk that the appellant while released on bail would commit an offence was not reasonably open."

*DPP v Stewart*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Morris J]

[2004] VSC 405

The 18 year old applicant had been in custody for 1½ months on 2 charges of armed robbery. His Honour held that cause was shown by the following 6 factors in combination:

* applicant had just turned 18;
* applicant suffers from an intellectual disability, possibly affected by "chroming";
* grandmother was offering her home and will provide love and care to the applicant;
* offences occurred during a period of transition between provision of services being provided to him as a person under 18 and adult services; and
* there are a number of support networks that are willing to assist the applicant in the community, namely Department of Health & Human Services, West Care & an aboriginal co-operative designed to deal with substance abuse; and
* there was a prospect that if convicted the appropriate sentence might be less than the remand period.

At [11] his Honour noted the relevance of the conditions of bail to the question of 'unacceptable risk':

"What is an unacceptable risk must be considered in the context of the conditions to which bail will be subject if bail is granted. In this case the conditions I propose will require a great deal of support from other people, which will be freely given. I think with that support there is a sufficient prospect of reducing the risk to one that is acceptable rather than unacceptable."

*Baris Nezif*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Habersberger J]

[2005] VSC 17

The applicant was charged with aggravated burglary, intentionally causing injury to his wife, unlawful assault on his wife and brother-in-law and criminal damage to the wall of the house owned by his wife and himself. The alleged offences occurred shortly after the applicant and his wife resumed cohabitation after a short separation. He was in a show cause situation because of the charge of aggravated burglary [s.4(4)(c)]. His Honour held that cause was shown, taking into account:

* affidavits from the applicant’s wife and mother-in-law asking that he be granted bail;
* the applicant’s family was by and large dependent on the applicant’s income to meet a very substantial mortgage on their home;
* the application was supported by a programme put forward by a bail support programme operating out of Melbourne Magistrates’ Court; and
* the applicant was able to undergo an assessment for the development of an anger management plan with the Creative Living Centre.

*Fred Joseph Asmar*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Maxwell P]

[2005] VSC 487

The 28 year old applicant was charged with three counts of false imprisonment, three counts of making threats to kill, three counts of making threats to inflict serious injury, two counts of unlawful assault, one count of possession of an unregistered firearm and one count of impersonating a member of the police force. It was alleged that at about 2.30am the applicant had got out of a vehicle holding a black handgun. He pointed the gun at three victims who had been performing and videotaping ‘slide outs’ in a Ford Laser Coupe, swore at them and threatened to shoot them. He told the victims to get down on their knees which they did. He looked at the licence of one of the victims and then told them to go home and not come back. He was in a show cause situation because of his alleged threat to use a firearm. His Honour held that cause was shown, holding that:

* the risk of the applicant committing another offence whilst on bail was small;
* if bail were refused the applicant would be in custody awaiting trial for something in the range of 14-16 months; and
* there were very powerful reasons – including the applicant’s family circumstances - for thinking that the applicant would comply strictly with the bail conditions, including a condition that he not have any contact with prosecution witnesses.

*R v Weaver*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Nettle JA]

[2006] VSC 102

The 42 year old applicant was charged with making a threat to kill and with an offence against s.22 of the *Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987*. Three months before he had been convicted of similar charges. Pursuant to s.4(4)(ba) of the **BA** he was in a show cause situation. In granting bail Nettle JA took into account evidence of good character of the applicant, his new relationship and the severe economic consequences for the applicant’s business if he was to remain in custody. At [27] His Honour held that the risk of re-offending and the risk of possible harm to the victim “may be reduced to an acceptable level by imposing [appropriate] conditions”.

*Griffiths v DPP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Bongiorno J]

[2007] VSC 268

The 35 year old applicant was charged with a number of indictable offences, the most serious of which was probably blackmail but also including threats to kill and breach of an intervention order. He had prior convictions for driving offences. He had been in custody for about 1½ months awaiting a committal some 6 months hence. In holding that the applicant had shown cause, Bongiorno J noted that:

* if the applicant were convicted it is not beyond the bounds of probability that he would receive a non-custodial sentence and even if he received a custodial sentence it is not unlikely that he would have served at least as long on remand if he were not bailed;
* the police informant’s concerns as to the applicant interfering with witnesses or committing further offences if he is bailed could be allayed by releasing the applicant on bail subject to non-contact conditions and by placing him under the effective supervision of his aunt.

*Kelly MIchael Gray*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Bongiorno J]

[2008] VSC 4

The applicant was charged with aggravated burglary and associated charges, including possession of an unregistered .38 calibre firearm, arising from a home invasion in which the occupant was alleged to have been assaulted by the applicant with a baseball bat or similar weapon. He had one relevant prior conviction 13 years before for assault occasioning actual bodily harm for which he was sentenced to 2 years gaol. Bail had been refused by a magistrate 6 weeks before. In holding that the applicant had shown cause, Bongiorno J noted that:

* though for obvious reasons it is generally inappropriate for a court to canvass the strength of the Crown case on a bail application, there was certainly a case against the applicant to be considered by a jury;
* the delay which may well attend the finalization of the case was such that the applicant might serve more time on remand than his ultimate sentence, this being a significant matter on any consideration of bail at common law or in light of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*;
* there was no real risk of the applicant fleeing the jurisdiction; and
* there was little tangible evidence that the applicant would re-offend or interfere with witnesses.

*Michael O’Connor*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Cummins J]

[2008] VSC 233

The applicant, who was 19 years old, had been charged with two sets of offences. The first dating from 19/10/2007 involved charges of aggravated burglary, intentionally/recklessly causing serious injury, assault with a weapon and assault in company. A magistrate had originally granted him bail on those charges on 21/01/2008 but he had not reapplied for bail when committed to stand trial on those charges on 12/05/2008. While on the original bail he was charged with offences of intentionally/recklessly causing injury, assault in company and assault by kicking allegedly committed on 26/04/2008. In granting the applicant bail in relation to both sets of charges, Cummins J noted:

* The youth of the applicant “of itself would not justify bail”.
* It was a combination of youth, significant support both from family and in the form of a rehabilitation program prepared for the applicant by a psychologist and the likelihood of significant delay which satisfied his Honour that the applicant had shown cause.

*Lawson Odlum*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Lasry J]

[2008] VSC 319

The applicant was 21 years old and had no prior convictions. He had been charged with a number of offences including attempted murder, intentionally causing serious injury, threat to kill, possess a prohibited weapon, possess a controlled weapon and possess amphetamine. The charges arose out of an alleged “road rage” incident. Bail had been refused by a magistrate 10 weeks before. In holding that the applicant had shown cause, Lasry J noted that:

* The applicable principles were set out by Maxwell P in *Re Fred Asmar* [2005] VSC 487.
* The alleged offending was “not a step in a pattern of violence but [was] almost inexplicably isolated”.
* The accused’s mother, a conscientious and honest witness with a positive influence on her son, gave an undertaking that she would notify the informant if she became aware of a breach of any conditions of bail.
* The accused had had a consistent work history and there was a high chance of him obtaining employment if he was released on bail.
* The accused had been accepted for the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) at Melbourne Magistrates’ Court.

*Kylie Vickers*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Cavanough J]

[2009] VSC 202

The applicant was facing summary prosecution of drug and other offences allegedly committed whilst on bail. There were five matters which in combination satisfied his Honour that the applicant had shown cause and reduced any risk of re-offending “to a level beneath the unacceptable”:

1. The period during which she would be held in custody pending the hearing was likely to exceed any sentence of imprisonment if she was found guilty of the offences [see *R v Gray* [2008] VSC 4 per Bongiorno J; *Re Walker* [2007] VSC 129 per Cavanough J; *R v Hildebrandt* [2006] VSC 198 per King J].
2. The applicant’s detoxification while in custody.
3. The fact that her “on and off partner” was in custody.
4. The applicant had been assessed as suitable for the Magistrates’ Court CREDIT bail program; even though the applicant had been through that program previously, his Honour expected it to have some beneficial effect on her future conduct, particularly in combination with the fact that she has now experienced relatively lengthy custody for the first time;
5. The set of special conditions upon which she was to be released on bail.

At [18] Cavanough J also referred with approval to the dicta of Eames J in *DPP v Jason Ghiller* [2000] VSC 435 at [43] – approved by Maxwell P in *Re Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 at [15] & [25] – that even in a show cause situation “the primary question relevant to a grant of bail is whether a person will meet the conditions of bail and attend at the trial, and as required.”

*Luke Clegg*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Hollingworth J]

[2012] VSC 317

The applicant was charged with 6 counts of burglary, 6 counts of theft and 1 charge of attempted theft allegedly committed while he was on bail for other offences. In granting bail, Hollingworth J imposed conditions which she was satisfied converted an unacceptable risk into an acceptable one:

“Certainly, given the applicant's history, it is fair to say that he has not demonstrated any particular respect for the law in the past. However, I have no doubt that his drug addiction and intellectual impairment have played some role in that. In the circumstances, it cannot be said that there is no risk of the applicant committing further offences, or breaching his bail; but, given the very rigorous conditions of bail which I propose to impose, I am satisfied that those risks are not unacceptable.”

*Roque Pasqua*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Lasry J]

[2013] VSC 132

The 50 year old applicant was charged with two sets of offences. The first set included possession, trafficking and use of methylamphetamine, retention of stolen goods, dealing with property suspected of being the proceeds of crime and failing to answer bail. The second set included receiving stolen goods, possessing drugs of dependence and breach of a suspended sentence. He was in a show cause situation pursuant to ss.4(4)(a) & 4(4)(ca) of the **BA**. The applicant had already been in custody for 6 months. His Honour was told by the informant that the delay in the matter being heard could be as great as another 12 months whilst he waits for fosensic analsysis of material seized from the applicant when he was arrested, a situation described by his Honour as “an extraordinary state of affairs”. The applicant had family support and had been approved for participation in the Court Integrated Services Program. In granting bail Lasry J said at [23]:

“It would seem to me that the use of this program and what appears to be a desire on the part of the applicant to submit himself to the program and to do something about his addition to drugs and other circumstances to which I have referred leave me in a position where although there is a risk in his release on bail, as there is in most cases, that risk can be ameliorated by conditions which will make the risk acceptable.”

*RS*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Elliott J]

[2013] VSC 350

The applicant who was aged 16y 2½m had until recently had no criminal record. Over a period between 07/05/2013 and 26/06/2013 he was arrested and charged on four separate occasions. The offences included 4 counts of obtaining financial advantage by deception, 3 counts of obtaining property by deception, 5 counts of theft from a motor vehicle, 1 count of theft and 1 count of possessing a prohibited weapon. In addition on 14/05/2013 and again on 05/06/2013 the applicant was arrested for breaching the curfew condition on bail on which he had been released. He had been remanded in custody on 26/06/2013 and on 03/07/2013 an application for bail was refused by the Children’s Court. In the Supreme Court a youth justice worker and gave evidence in support of bail being granted. Although opposing bail, the informant was “very supportive of the applicant and quite sympathetic to his circumstances”. In granting bail, Elliott J said at [20]-[21]:

“I have decided that the applicant’s detention is not justified and that it is appropriate to grant bail in the circumstances. Given that the level of support which is now being made available to the applicant, together with the applicant’s change of attitude in relation to drug use and counselling, I believe his prospects have been considerably improved. Further, the applicant is obviously respectful to the authorities, including the police. If he is required to report regularly to a local police station it is likely that will substantially reduce the risk of reoffending.

I am also persuaded that, given he has already spent approximately 2 weeks on remand, there is a real prospect that his term of imprisonment might be as long or even longer than the length of time he might spend imprisoned in the event that he were to plead guilty to the charges laid against him: see *In the matter of an Application for Bail by Patricia Mitchell* [2013] VSC 59, [12]. Finally, if the applicant was to be held until the trial of his offences, there is a real basis for being concerned that the extended period of incarceration would have a significantly deleterious effect on him.”

*Nicholas Kiourellis*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bell J]

[2014] VSC 1 at [109]-[119]

The applicant who was aged 20y 7m had no criminal history. He had been on remand for several days on charges including 3 counts of trafficking a drug of dependence (MDMA ecstasy). Bail had been refused on the basis that he had not shown cause and was a risk of further offending. He comes from a supportive and loving family. His offending was related to drug addiction which appears to be related to an untreated mental illness of unknown severity Bell J held that with support and appropriate conditions of bail the risk of reoffending to support his drug dependence could be acceptably managed. Only modest reporting was required as the applicant is not a flight risk. There should be a residential condition for the applicant to reside at the address of his family to minimise the risk of relapse and further offending. There is no need for a surety or curfew.

*MA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Croucher J]

[2014] VSC 11

Applicant aged 16 with mild intellectual disability – Applicant initially bailed several times on successive sets of charges of dishonesty and driving offences – Applicant pleaded guilty to those charges in Children’s Court – Sentence deferred until April 2014 to allow further assessment by Client Disability Services – Applicant charged with further offences of theft from cars, theft of petrol and unlicensed driving allegedly committed whilst on bail – Applicant has shown cause why detention not justified – Respondent has not shown an unacceptable risk of offending on bail – Bail granted on own undertaking with conditions including curfew, direction to attend school and prohibition on driving a motor vehicle.

*Peter John Hewat*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Rush J]

[2014] VSC 240

Applicant who had two other sets of charges pending had had bail refused in Supreme Court. Subsequently he had received suspended sentences of imprisonment on those two other sets of charges. Rush J held at [16] that the risk of the applicant re-offending is lessened in circumstances where he is subject to two suspended sentences. Applying the reasoning of Kellam J in *Mokbel v DPP (No 3)* [2002] VSC 393 at [6], Rush J held at [17] that the lengthy delay in obtaining a date for trial of the current offences, which had not yet been subject to a committal hearing, was “a significant factor in determining it is appropriate to grant the applicant bail.”

*Michael Murray*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Garde J]

[2014] VSC 249

Applicant, who was the Victorian commander of the Comanchero Motorcycle Club, was charged with offences of making a threat to kill, assault and attempting to pervert the course of justice allegedly committed when he was on bail for charges of possessing drugs of dependence (testosterone and human growth hormone) and firearms offences. He was therefore in a show cause situation. After referring to the cases of *DPP (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 & *Re Hewat* [2014] VSC 240, Garde J held that the accused had shown cause: “The significant delay to trial of 12-18 months tips the scale in favour of granting bail, albeit bail only on the most stringent conditions.” These included a surety of $1 million, daily reporting to police and a curfew between 9pm and 6am each day.

*TM v AH & Ors*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2014] VSC 560 – a most compassionately written judgment

Applicant is an Aboriginal boy aged 14 with a significant intellectual disability: “IQ has been estimated at 70 when aged six, 50 when aged eight, 52 when aged 11 and as low as 43 when aged 12. As recently as last year, a psychologist opined that he was *doli incapax*. He reads but barely at the level of a prep child. He does not understand concepts such as time, in terms of the hour of the day, but recognised sunset and sunrise. He finds difficulty grasping the notion that his case in this Court was adjourned from a Friday to the next Wednesday. A psychologist has advised that any spoken instruction must be given to TM in brief sentences presenting just one idea at a time.” Referring to s.3A of the **BA** [as to which see **section 9.4.11** below] Croucher J said: “TM’s ties to his family and home are strong, yet he is a long way from them at the moment and has been in that situation for nearly six months.” The applicant was refused bail by a magistrate pending appeal against a 10 month sentence of detention in YRC and in respect of several other charges for offences, some of which were allegedly committed while on bail. TM was held to have shown cause based on his tender age, his intellectual disability, his lack of prior convictions, the requirements of s.3A of the **BA**, the reasonable prospect that he will receive a non-custodial sentence on appeal and on the outstanding charges as well as the proposed regime put in place for his release, all of which compelled the view that his further detention in custody was not justified. Further these same considerations, particularly the plan for his release together with the conditions of bail imposed, led to Croucher J being satisfied that there was not an unacceptable risk.that TM would commit offences or endanger his own or the public’s safety if released on bail with conditions including residence, a curfew, a prohibition on driving a motor vehicle and compliance with directions of the Department of Health & Human Services.

*Robinson v R*

[Court of Appeal – Maxwell P, Redlich & Priest JJA]

[2015] VSCA 161

Forrest J had refused bail to an alleged trafficking conspirator and drug debt enforcer who wrote to a co-accused from prison indicating that he needed to get out of prison so that he could make money to pay his lawyer. His Honour held that the applicant had not shown cause despite a probable 2 year delay, the availability of a surety of $50,000 and the availability of residential rehabilitation at Recovery OZ. The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal and granted bail on strict conditions. The issue of delay was very significant. The investigation had produced 30,000 telephone communications resulting in approximately 6,000 pages of transcript, 1,000 hours of surveillance material, 100,000 mobile calls and over 100 statements. The case was not likely to be ready/reached until late 2016 resulting in the accused being in custody for some 2 years prior to trial. At [87] Priest JA concluded:

“Against the background of a two year delay in the matter coming to trial, it is unjust to keep the applicant in custody in circumstances where the risk of re-offending and interfering with witnesses can, in my view, adequately be addressed by appropriately strict conditions. Appropriately restrictive conditions will render the putative risks acceptable. Once such conditions are in place, given the delay, it is not open to conclude other than that the applicant has satisfied the burden of showing cause why his detention in custody is not justified."

*Luke James*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Rush J]

[2015] VSC 175

The 24 year old applicant had been placed on 3 CCOs and was non-compliant as well as reoffending. Additionally, he had produced falsified documentation from his employer explaining non-attendance at mandatory appointments. He was charged, *inter alia*, with trafficking and possession of several types of drugs and released on bail in August 2014. He was further charged on summons with offences including possession of scales, cash and a baseball bat in December 2014. In March 2015, he was charged with trafficking ice and ecstasy, being in possession of proceeds of crime as well as a prohibited weapon. He was refused bail at Ringwood Magistrates’ Court. On appeal, Rush J granted him bail due to his age and the fact that he had been in custody for the first time. His Honour’s reasons included at [10]:

“Thirdly, on 7 April 2015, Credit Bail assessed the applicant as a suitable candidate for their program. Ms Joanne Spanos, of Credit Bail, gave evidence at the applicant’s bail hearing in April that she would be willing to provide increased support to the applicant, with a particular focus towards addressing his drug abuse problem. The applicant has also been deemed suitable to participate in a rehabilitation program conducted by Mr Kerry Cussen, who is a drug and alcohol counsellor at SalvoCare. Senior Constable Hutchinson agreed this program would be rehabilitative if complied with. The support and supervision being offered by Credit Bail and SalvoCare is an imperative ingredient to any grant of bail. It is put that the application will take active steps to address his drug addiction and therefore continue to remain drug free as he has been since he entered remand four to five weeks ago. Additionally, the applicant understands any breaches of the stringent conditions imposed ensuring participation in these programs, including non-attendance at appointments, will be reported to the Court immediately and will be a breach of bail conditions.”

*Nguyen v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – T Forrest J]

[2015] VSC 69

Ms Nguyen was 25 years old and 4 months pregnant and had several priors for trafficking. She was charged, along with her co-accused, with possession of 311g of heroin, 52g of ice (valued at $123,000), a taser, a police baton, a hunting knife, an imitation gun, $22,845 in cash and a hydraulic heroin press among other paraphernalia. His Honour was satisfied that the delay before coming to trial was likely to be significant. At [14] his Honour said: “After anxious consideration, I consider that the applicant’s current circumstances, and the supports offered to her if released on bail, are sufficient to mitigate the high risk of her re-offending to an acceptable level.” Included amongst those supports was an integrated services program which had been prepared for the applicant and which included level 2 intermediate case management by the CISP team.

*Giurguis*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Priest JA]

[2015] VSC 242

Mr Giurguis was charged with digital penetration, threats to kill, false imprisonment, stalking, indecent assault and unlawful assault. The accused and the complainant had renewed a distant friendship and began using ice together. The accused became obsessed with the complainant. The allegations of the two incidents are chilling. At [47] his Honour said: “[T]he applicant does not pose an unacceptable risk in the manner posited by the respondent. Any risk may be adequately controlled by conditions of bail.”

*SG v TA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2015] VSC 264

This was an application for bail by a 15 year old boy charged with robbery, theft and blackmail and with committing those indictable offences while on bail. The applicant has prior and subsequent findings of guilt. His Honour held that the applicant had shown cause why his detention was not justified and the respondent had not shown that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of offending or interfering with the course of justice if bailed. At [20] & [32] his Honour said:

[20] “In my view, it is far preferable, from both the applicant’s and the community’s perspectives, that a boy of the applicant’s age and history be in the community furthering his education and employment prospects than housed in a detention centre with older and probably more criminally-experienced boys and risking the contamination that sometimes occurs in such an environment.

[32] In particular, the following matters, in combination, satisfy me that the applicant’s detention in custody is not justified and that such risks as the informant is concerned about were bail to be granted are not unacceptable: the accommodation and support provided by the applicant’s parents; the applicant’s youth; his impressionability in detention; the weaknesses in the prosecution case; the preparedness of Youth Justice to supervise him; the applicant’s behaviour while in detention; the educational regime proposed upon his release; the potential employment opportunity his brother is seeking; the real risk that, if bail were refused, the time spent in custody before the ultimate hearing could exceed any penalty imposed upon a finding of guilt; and the proposed conditions of bail.”

*Re BKT*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2018] VSC 240

The 16 year old applicant was charged with theft [allegedly having snatched a mobile phone] and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He had been refused bail and remanded in custody by the Children’s Court 7 days before. He was in a show cause situation, having been on bail at the time of the alleged offence. In granting bail with strict conditions Champion J took into account the matters in s.3B(1) of the *Bail Act 1977* relating specifically to children and also that the respondent did not resist the conclusion that cause had been shown by the applicant, subject to the Court’s ruling and the imposition of suitable bail conditions. His Honour also found that the prosecution had not demonstrated that the applicant was an unacceptable risk.

*Riko Tomas*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2016] VSC 476

The applicant was charged with attempted murder, affray and other offences against the person. He was alleged to have been part of a group of men who attended business premises to remonstrate with another person. A co-accused fired a handgun, grazing the head of the complainant. At the time the applicant was on bail on other charges. His Honour held it was a weak case against the applicant on the charge of attempted murder and there was a significant risk that he may spend more time in custody than any sentence likely to be imposed if convicted of a lesser alternative offence. Although he had prior convictions, including several for failing to appear on bail, his Honour held that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk of offending, of failing to appear on bail or of interfering with witnesses. Bail was granted with two sureties, daily reporting to police and other conditions.

*DA*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Emerton J – 26/07/2018]

The 17 year old applicant – who has an IQ of 56 and has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability and a speech articulation disorder – lived with his parents and six siblings, the family having migrated from the Sudan in 2005. He had no prior criminal history. He had been charged, *inter alia*, with 2 counts of robbery and one of attempted robbery, the alleged offences having been committed while he was in bail on charges including attempted robbery, assault with intent to rob and affray. The prosecution conceded that the applicant was unlikely to receive a custodial term if found guilty. Her Honour found there was a compelling reason for the grant of bail and was satisfied that any risk of reoffending could be “mitigated by the imposition of conditions requiring him to reside with his family, remain at home at night, avoid using public transport or frequenting public transport facilities and to obey directions given to him by or through the Foundation and YUP”.

*JM*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Champion J]

[2019] VSC 156

The 16 year old applicant was charged with aggravated burglary, theft, criminal damage, unlawful assault, obtaining property by deception, attempting to obtain property by deception, handling stolen goods, unlicensed driving and marking graffiti without consent. He had a special vulnerability, having a history of deliberate self-harm and suicidal ideation, including attempted suicide by drug overdose. He has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), has substance abuse issues and remains at risk of self-harm. Support and treatment services were available in the community. Bail was not opposed by the respondent. Unacceptable risk was not demonstrated and bail was granted subject to conditions.

*JK*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Hollingworth J]

[2020] VSC 160

The 19 year old applicant had been in custody since he was charged with murder when he was 17 years old. On 11/03/2020 he was acquitted of the murder of a Mr B. His co-accused was found guilty of that murder. The jury was discharged after being unable to reach a verdict against JK on the statutory alternative of manslaughter. He will face a new trial on a fresh indictment for manslaughter at a later date. JK has never denied being involved with JF in an assault on Mr Bourke but he denies being responsible for Mr Bourke’s death. His defence at trial was that he had not inflicted (or agreed to the infliction of) any serious blows, and had withdrawn from the attack before the fatal blows were struck, after trying to stop JF from further assaulting Mr Bourke. It is clear that the jury was divided on the question of whether or not JK had effectively withdrawn. JK had a minimal criminal history. He had adequate supervision and support on bail and his application was supported by Youth Justice. Her Honour found that a compelling reason was shown and any relevant risks were able to be managed by bail conditions, including judicial monitoring. On the issue of the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic her Honour said at [22]-[26]:

[22] “Apart from delay, the pandemic affects this bail application in two important respects.

[23] First, the Malmsbury facility where JK is currently being held has suspended all personal visits. JK can no longer see his family every week, as he has done throughout his time in custody. There is no indication as to when personal visits may resume but, based on public statements by the government, one would have to think that is many months away. True it is that the pandemic is forcing many families to communicate via phone or audio-visual links, but the effects of actual physical separation from family can be more acute for young persons than adults. Section 3B(1)(b) of the *Bail Act* expressly recognises the importance of strengthening and preserving such relationships in the case of accused who are children.

[24] Secondly, the pandemic has affected JK’s opportunities to continue with education and training. Whilst in custody, JK has been receiving an education through services provided at Malmsbury by Parkville College. He recently completed his VCAL to Year 11. Prior to the pandemic, he was proposing to continue on with further study through Parkville. Schooling through Parkville has ceased in line with Department of Education requirements.

[25] It may be the case that Parkville or Malmsbury will find a way of offering educational activities during the pandemic, but at the moment there is no evidence as to when that might be, or what form it might take. On the other hand, the Youth Justice report sets out various online educational and training opportunities that would be immediately available to JK, were he to be released on bail.

[26] Once again there is a statutory imperative to have regard to the desirability of allowing educational and training opportunities for children to continue without interruption or disturbance.”

*David Chambers*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 758

The 38 year old applicant with no prior convictions was charged with family violence offending against his domestic partner including reckless conduct endangering life arising from application of pressure to throat of complainant causing laryngeal fracture – serious offending and reasonably strong prosecution case – onerous conditions due to COVID-19 and mental state of applicant on remand due to withholding of prescription medication - custody a particularly aversive and salutary experience in this case – delay – relationship now ended and situation in which offending arose no longer in existence – availability of employment, stable accommodation, and drug support for applicant – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not made out – bail granted on stringent conditions.

*Justin Blackmore*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 93

The 19 year old applicant had diagnoses of a learning difficulty, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, drug-induced schizophrenia, depression and anxiety. He had been on remand for about one month charged with aggravated burglary, criminal damage, unlawful assault x 2, assault by kicking, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and contravening a family violence safety notice x 2 relating to his sisters. Coghlan JA was satisfied at [19] that “because of the question of delay and the likely sentence the applicant would receive, a compelling reason for the granting of bail has been made out”. At [22] his Honour noted that “notwithstanding the fact that weight must be given to unacceptable risk, it does not mean that we use bail as a means of preventative detention. Although, it is plain in some cases of very, very serious offending, that is of the effect of the operation of this part of the *Bail Act* has.” In granting bail his Honour applied s.5AAAA of the **BA** and made the applicant subject to an interim family violence intervention order on the Court’s own motion with the applicant’s two sisters and the children of one of his sisters named as the protected persons.

*Massimiliano Macri*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Coghlan JA]

[2021] VSC 111

The applicant had been on remand for nearly 6 months charged with armed robbery, false imprisonment, making a threat to kill x 2 and making a threat to inflict serious injury x 2. In granting bail Coghlan JA said at [24]: “This is a case which reflects the difficulty that the criminal justice system finds itself in. If this matter could proceed in a reasonably prompt way, I would not find that compelling reason had been made out and I would not grant bail. I am satisfied, however, that based on the question of delay, taken together with the absence of prior convictions and therefore the absence of any prior adverse bail history, that compelling reasons have been made out.” His Honour went on to say at [27]: “[T]hat is not to say that I do not regard him as being a risk, but in the circumstances, I am not satisfied that it is an unacceptable risk.”

*Re DF*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Croucher J]

[2024] VSC 122

The 16 year old applicant DF was charged with numerous offences, including intentionally causing serious injury, failing to stop after collision and theft of motor car. Police allege DF, while in stolen car with other youths, deliberately drove at cyclist, and then at another a short time later, knocking each rider off the bike, thereby causing serious injury, and failed to stop. The incidents were in part recorded on a mobile phone and CCTV. Police allege that, eight days later, while holding an axe and in company, DF robbed another youth of phone. DF, born in Samoa, was living with his uncle GH and extended family in Melbourne but GH and family were overseas when the most serious alleged offending occurred. DF was enrolled in school but had a past history of truanting. Casual employment was available with GH on weekends. DF was assessed by Youth Justice as suitable for the Supervised Bail Program. GH undertook to ensure that DF, if bailed, was taken to and from school, Youth Justice appointments and court hearings and to report failures to comply with bail. DF had no prior findings of guilt. DF has been on remand in youth detention for nearly 7 weeks.

Compelling reason was established by the following matters in combination: 1/DF is a child to whom s.3B(1) **BA** applies. 2/DF has no previous criminal history. 3/This was DF’s first time in custody. 4/DF has been assessed as suitable for the Supervised Bail Program. 5/DF has stable accommodation with GH and family and would be supported by them if released on bail. 6/It would be desirable if DF’s education were to continue in the community. 7/DF would have part-time employment with GH on weekends to assist in keeping him occupied.

Croucher J held at [52] that “after anxious consideration, having regard in particular to the evidence I have heard from [Youth Justice team leader] Mr McGregor and GH, which I accept, and the proposed conditions of bail, I am not satisfied that the risk of endangering the safety or welfare of others or of committing an offence while on bail is unacceptable.” Bail was granted on DF’s own undertaking with conditions.

*Re McLaughlin*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Incerti J]

[2024] VSC 706

See also **section 9.4.11** below.

The applicant was a 35 year old Aboriginal woman charged with a number of violent offences, including recklessly causing injury, contravening a personal safety intervention order, unlawful assault, assault police and attempted armed robbery. At [49] Incerti J detailed the following reasons why the applicant had shown a compelling reason:

“Although it is conceded by the respondent that the applicant has demonstrated a compelling reason justifying her release on bail, I would have considered that this threshold was met in any event. Ms McLaughlin has never served a term of imprisonment and has no recorded convictions. It is therefore very unlikely that she will receive a sentence that exceeds the period on remand and this is a compelling factor. Further, I take into account that discrimination has pervaded the lives of Aboriginal people and that incarceration has a cyclical impact on their social and emotional wellbeing.7 I have also taken into account the challenging circumstances that Ms McLaughlin has faced in her life, especially an involvement with foster care from a very young age and an upbringing riddled with trauma. Additionally, her offending appears to coincide with a deterioration in her mental health, which provides yet another compelling reason for placing her with supports rather than behind bars. Ms McLaughlin is also a direct descendant of the Stolen Generation and it is important to acknowledge the impact this may have on her. For example, a recent study of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has explored the lasting impacts on the descendants of the Stolen Generation as compared to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people without any experience of being removed, which included a finding that descendants are 1.5 times as likely to have been arrested in the last five years and 1.3 times as likely to have poor mental health.” [citations omitted]

In finding that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk and in releasing her on bail subject to various conditions, Incerti J said at [50]-[56]:

[50] “The significant question in this matter is whether the applicant poses an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person.

[51] There is a very real risk that the applicant will endanger others, as it is evident that her offending was escalating in the days leading up to the offending and there was already a PSIO in place to protect the complainant in one of the incidents.

[52] However, as I have said above, the question is whether this risk is ‘unacceptable’ when viewed against the supports available to the applicant on bail and when taking into consideration the need to not contribute to the number of Aboriginal people in custody (without good reason).

[53] The applicant proposes a range of services to address this risk. These were not available to her prior to entering custody and, if she avails herself of the services, will offer a significant protective factor. The services are voluntary and are far from a complete ‘wraparound’ service. However, the question is whether the conditions are able to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. I am satisfied that the suite of services offered by the NJC go a long way to addressing this risk, including an appointment with Sara Cantwell to facilitate access to these services. I will make attending the appointment with Ms Cantwell a condition of bail.

[54] It is equally clear that the applicant was experiencing a deterioration in her mental health at the time of the offending and this is a significant contributor to the risk she poses. Since her last bail application, the applicant no longer meets the criteria for an inpatient assessment order and the Court was informed that this, in part, may stem from her compliance with medication while on remand. It also demonstrates that her mental health has improved to some degree and that she is willing to engage with mental health services and medication.

[55] Finally, and as I have explored above, the s 3A considerations are a strongly determinative factor in assessing whether the risk is unacceptable. It is significant that the grant of bail may assist the applicant in seeking a resolution to this matter through the Koori Court. In any event, it is clear from the applicant’s early engagement with art and her efforts to honour her late father, that her culture is an important protective factor. The availability of culturally appropriate services as part of her bail conditions are an important consideration. Although I accept there is risk in this grant of bail, I see no good reason to contribute to the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody by keeping Ms McLaughlin incarcerated.

[56] I have had regard to the paramount importance of community safety when deciding to grant bail. The question a bail maker needs to ask is whether bail conditions provide the necessary protection to the community and the accused in the short and long term. Put another way, do the conditions make the risk an acceptable one. In this case, treatment for Ms McLaughlin’s mental health and substance abuse are critical to community safety and protection. The proposed conditions provide a realistic pathway to address these concerns. Access to the NJC and the other support services is more likely to provide short term and ongoing benefits and protection to the applicant and the community compared to further time on remand.”

*Re DZ (a pseudonym)*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – T Forrest J]

[2024] VSC 687

The 17 year old Aboriginal applicant with a mild intellectual disability was facing multiple charges including aggravated intentional exposure of an emergency worker to a safety risk, aggravated reckless exposure of an emergency worker to a safety risk, theft of a motor vehicle, unlicensed driving, attempted robbery — applicant has no priors but has a number of pending matters – respondent did not oppose a finding of compelling reasons and focussed his arguments on unacceptable risk – his Honour quoted statements of principle enunciated by the Court of Appeal in *Roberts v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 28 at [9]-[10] & *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [54]-[61] and concluded at [45]-[48]:

[45] “The shorthand version of those paragraphs is, inter alia, that the risk must be evaluated in the light of all the circumstances, including unreasonable delay, and those circumstances in combination may be such as to render a risk as acceptable when otherwise it may not be so. The object is to prevent injustice by what could be seen as preventative detention. Those paragraphs also articulate what is now the sentiment and indeed, some of the words of the redrafted s 3A of the Act.

[46] I indicate that my decision-making on this application has been informed by all relevant sections of the Act, but particularly ss 3A and 3B of the Act

[47] After anxious consideration, I am not satisfied that the applicant is an unacceptable risk pursuant to s 4E(1)(a)(i) of the Act, provided that stringent conditions are attached to the grant of bail.29

[48] I propose to grant bail in the applicant’s own undertaking with a number of quite stringent special conditions.”

Other cases in which compelling reason (cause) was shown and bail was granted include:

* *Luke Aaron Self* [2005] VSC 108 (Hollingworth J).
* *Shane Peter Walker* [2007] VSC 129 (Cavanough J).
* *Re Joshua Barban & Karl Anthony Barban* [2007] VSC 335 (Hollingworth J).
* *Re Mae Loc Tran* [2008] VSC 191 (Hollingworth J-desirability of accused undertaking intensive drug addiction treatment).
* *IMO bail application by Mahmoud Kheir* [2008] VSC 492 (Osborn J-trafficking drugs/possession of firearms/delay).
* *Re Paul Hanlon Flood* [2010] VSC 605 (Lasry J-aggravated burglary/cause shown by commitment of the applicant’s carer/”The applicant is at a final turning point.”).
* *Re Mark Anthony Handler* [2013] VSC 166 (Kaye J-applicant a qualified industrial chemist charged with multiple counts of trafficking amphetamines/cause shown by previous good character of applicant, no unacceptable risk of re-offending and delay of 18-24 months before trial).
* *Sanchez v DPP* [2013] VSC 707 (Croucher J-applicant initially bailed on charges of stalking, breach of IVO, burglary and theft/further charges of aggravated burglary, breach of IVO and others allegedly committed whilst on bail/delay-if not granted bail applicant would spend about 21 months in custody before trial-bail granted with surety of $10,000 and conditions including curfew, daily reporting and weekly counselling).
* *Smith v DPP* [2014] VSC 60 (Croucher J-multiple counts of car theft, arson, reckless conduct endangering life and other offences/bail granted with surety of $5,000 and on very strict conditions “which might be thought to be akin to house arrest” including curfew, twice daily reporting and prohibition on driving car).
* *Application for Bail by Ibrahim El-Sayah* [2016] VSC 716 (Jane Dixon J-21 year old applicant facing 17 charges including burglary x 9 and theft x 5/bail granted with one surety of $15,000 and on very strict conditions).
* *Application for Bail by Jaydon Reynolds* [2016] VSC 730 (Elliott J-21 year old applicant facing 7 charges including trafficking in a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence/bail granted with one surety of $100,000 and on very strict conditions including residence at Odyssey House).
* *Re Alsulayhim* [2018] VSC 570 (Beach JA-31 year old international student with no prior criminal history charged with unlawful assault, sexual assault, sexual assault by compelling sexual touching (x2), rape by compelling sexual penetration (x3), rape (x3), false imprisonment (x2) and detention for a sexual purpose (x2) arising out of events involving one complainant alleged to have occurred on the one day/bail granted on conditions with one surety of $200,000).
* *Re Walker* [2018] VSC 804 (Champion J-22 year old man with moderate intellectual disability and vulnerable in custody charged with stalking, using a carriage service to menace. threat to kill, threat to harass, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and using a carriage service to procure a child under 16 (in the form of a police officer pretending that identity) for sexual activity/bail not opposed and granted with conditions).
* *Re McAsey* [2019] VSC 88 (Champion J-51 year old Aboriginal man on summons for possessing child pornography was charged with aggravated burglary and attempted armed robbery; compelling reason shown by lack of relevant criminal history, stable marriage, employment history, financial hardship to wife if bail refused to her financial provider and prosecution case not “open and shut”).
* *Mohamed* [2019] VSC 83 (Champion J-20 year old man charged with armed robbery/no criminal history/family support/employment & study/bail granted with conditions allowing applicant to return to Western Australia).
* *Re Neskovski* [2019] VSC 447 (Beach JA-28 year old man charged with dangerous driving causing death, failing to stop after a motor vehicle accident, careless driving and culpable driving causing death/no prior convictions, employed for 9 years in father’s business, issues between the parties capable of being contested, already in custody for 6m and likely to be a further 12m if not bailed/bail granted on conditions with one surety of $75,000).
* *Re DG* [2019] VSC 622 (Zammit J) – 16 year old boy charged with rape, false imprisonment and unlicensed driving/youth justice not supporting bail/family support/time on remand may exceed any sentence imposed/compelling reason established/bail granted on conditions including judicial monitoring, albeit not by the Supreme Court but by the Children’s Court which had refused bail).
* *Re Mallouk* [2019] VSC 661 (Lasry J-23 year old man charged with a series of burglaries in which ±$100,000 worth of cigarettes were stolen and ±$650,000 damage was caused to burgled premises/at time applicant was on CCO/supportive family and accommodation/17 month delay/compelling reason established/bail granted on conditions).
* *Re Ebertowski* [2019] VSC 676 (Lasry J-41 year old man charged with trespass, criminal damage, unlawful assault and possession of a poison/bail not opposed/compelling reason established/bail granted on conditions).
* *Re Koshani* [2019] VSC 678 (Ashley J-38 year old man charged with 14 charges arising in a domestic setting, including threat to kill x 3, assault x 3/compelling reason shown arising from a combination of factors including the departure of one complainant from Australia with no planned return date, the length of period in custody compared with likely sentence, availability of secure and supervised accommodation and secure employment and applicant’s willingness to engage in relevant programs with health professionals).
* *Re Mihalitsis* [2020] VSC 6 (Weinberg JA-41 year old man charged with intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence and related offences/offending occurred in context of heightened state of methamphetamine addiction/likely lengthy delay between arrest and any trial/no relevant prior convictions/compelling reason shown, *inter alia*, by evidence of strong family support and that the applicant if bailed would be provided with comprehensive treatment services designed to deal with his drug addiction and personality disorder).
* *Re JB* [2020] VSC 184 (Kaye JA-16 year old boy charged with multiple offences including theft, handling stolen goods, reckless conduct endangering serious injury while on bail – COVID-19 pandemic relevant to delay and to making any period of remand more onerous – risk a difficult issue but not unacceptable given the applicant’s age and circumstances).
* *Re Guinane* [2020] VSC 208 (Tinney J-31 year old man charged with family violence offending – compelling reason conceded by respondent – delay and onerous custodial conditions caused by COVID-19 – delay likely to exceed any custodial sentence – limited prior convictions and first time in custody – able to live with supportive mother and engage in employment and counselling – not unacceptable risk – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Che Ashton* [2020] VSC 231 (Elliott J-33 year old man charged with Schedule 2 offences: aggravated burglary, rape and assault with intent to commit a sexual offence – significant ongoing delay as a result of COVID-19 pandemic – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not established by respondent – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Hu* [2020] VSC 285 (Incerti J-34 year old man charged with the serious offence of causing an unauthorised impairment of an electronic communication – he was on bail for a similar offence – compelling reason shown by delay in proceedings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no criminal history and the length of time in custody if bail refused was likely to be longer than any sentence imposed – no unacceptable risk – bail granted with special conditions).
* *Re Brzezowski* [2020] VSC 294 (Tinney J-45 year old man charged with family violence offending and subsequent contravention of a family violence intervention order and breach of conditions of bail – violent and sexual offending alleged – modest criminal history but some previous allegations of family violence – a full year on remand would be a significant period of time for a case which, whilst admittedly serious, will remain in the summary stream, especially significant in light of the current onerous conditions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not proved – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Karl Bacash* [2020] VSC 365 (Champion J– applicant was facing 17 charges including rape, administration of an intoxicating substance for a sexual purpose, possess morphine, theft and receiving stolen goods arising from 3 separate rape investigations – applicant had targeted vulnerable, intoxicated females in the early hours of the morning in inner city Melbourne – applicant had no prior criminal history and an ill elderly mother – compelling reason established and bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Lily Goodwin* [2020] VSC 459 (Coghlan JA- applicant charged with drug trafficking and related offences – application unopposed – compelling reason established by virtue of potential delay, the likely sentence to be imposed if convicted, the lack of priors and other matters personal to the applicant).
* *Re Yousif Elias* [2020] VSC 502 (Priest JA-applicant was a youthful offender charged with Schedule 2 offences – first time in custody – conditions of custody onerous due to COVID-19 pandemic – bail granted on strict conditions).
* *Re Brett Taylor* [2020] VSC 526 (Coghlan JA-applicant charged with rape x 4 and assault x 2).
* *Re Marco Gastello* [2020] VSC 548 (Coghlan JA-applicant charges with rape x 2 – significant delay).
* *Re AK* [2020] VSC 625 (Lasry J-17 year old applicant [16 at the time of the alleged offending] was charged with theft of a motor car and offences relating to a police pursuit, including dangerous or negligent driving when pursued by police, reckless conduct endangering life, speed dangerous, failing to render assistance after an accident and intentionally causing serious injury – compelling reason established by a combination of the applicant’s personal circumstances, the fact that he is a child, that he has no formal criminal history and has the support of Youth Justice – bail granted on conditions including judicial monitoring and an 8pm-5am curfew).
* *Re Griffin* [2020] VSC 626 (Lasry J-27 year old applicant charged with 9 offences including aggravated burglary and intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence previously refused bail {see [2020] VSC 312} – New facts established being acceptance in residential drug rehabilitation program – compelling reason found – conditional bail granted on an interim basis).
* *Turner v Lill* [2020] VSC 812 (Croucher J-37 year old applicant charged with dishonesty offences, including counterfeiting, and driving offences while on bail – in custody 2½ months – criminal history for similar offending – bed available at Odyssey House for long-term residential rehabilitation program – compelling reason found – bail granted to Odyssey House).
* *Re Gurkan* [2020] VSC 855 (Kaye JA-32 year old applicant charged with intentionally causing serious injury, reckless conduct endangering life and firearms offences – no relevant prior convictions – applying dicta of Beach, Kaye and Ashley JJA in *Rodgers v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 214 compelling reason was established by a combination of factors including delay and family and business responsibilities of the applicant – unacceptable risk not established – conditional bail granted).
* *Clarke v Scanlon* [2021] VSC 19 (Croucher J-38 year old applicant charged with recklessly causing injury to and threatening to kill her partner’s 61 year old father, recklessly causing injury to a police officer and other offences – applicant mentally unwell at the time and appears to remain so – family violence intervention order now in place – inpatient assessment order made – no prior convictions – suitable care and accommodation away from partner’s father – bail not opposed – mental impairment defence may be available – imprisonment extremely unlikely if ever convicted).
* *Re Key* [2021] VSC 109 (Tinney J-22 year old applicant with no criminal history charged with two separate bouts of alleged offending {affray, recklessly causing injury, robbery} separated by 21 months – up to six months of pre-hearing remand a prospect – may exceed likely sentence upon conviction – onerous conditions on remand – risk of time in custody interfering with prospects of rehabilitation – supportive family and home environment – respondent conceded that it would be open to Court to decide both steps of the bail process in favour of the applicant – compelling reason made out – Unacceptable risk not established).
* *Re Gorwell* [2021] VSC 144 (Lasry J-52 year old applicant charged with trafficking cannabis, possessing heroin and dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime – charged and bailed, then remained on bail for 12 months until plea hearing and for further two weeks until sentence — sentenced to six months’ imprisonment combined with community correction order of 12 months — application for bail pending appeal of sentence refused by magistrate – compelling reason made out – unacceptable risk not established).
* *Re Fayyaz* [2021] VSC 208 (Tinney J-41 year old applicant with no criminal history charged with sexual penetration of a 12 year old step-daughter over a significant period – significant delay inevitable before trial – strong family support and stable accommodation geographically removed from location of complainant – employment available – surety of $20,000 – interim family violence intervention order in place – compelling reason made out on basis of a combination of matters – unacceptable risk not established).
* *Re Tofaris* [2021] VSC 249 (Lasry J – 39 year old applicant charged with extortion and false imprisonment – potential delay of 3 years before trial – surety available – health concerns while in custody – impact of continued incarceration on applicant’s business – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not demonstrated).
* *Re AM (No.2)* [2021] VSC 284 (Tinney J – 18 year old applicant charged with robbery arising from a planned robbery with gang connection – plea already entered – significant time already spent on remand – family support and stable accommodation – youth justice support – bail not opposed by prosecution).
* *Re CO* [2021] VSC 412 (Jane Dixon J-32 year old applicant charged with stalking, making threats to kill and various other threats towards a female with whom he may have had a past romantic relationship and with whom he had become obsessed – one prior for recklessly cause injury which resulted in a good behaviour bond – a history of substance use, including daily ice use at the time of the alleged offending – after evidence was given by the applicant and his mother, counsel for the respondent acknowledged that there were lots of factors in favour of the compelling reason test being satisfied, conceded that community protection can be served by rehabilitation and noted that the applicant’s time on remand could exceed any sentence imposed – in relation to risk, he underscored the seriousness of the alleged offending – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Farmer* [2021] VSC 417 (Jane Dixon J-30 year old applicant charged withextortion and false imprisonment (co-accused of *Tofaris* [2021] VSC 249) – potential delay of 3 years before trial – bail granted by magistrate with one surety of $200,000 – applicant unable to raise surety – application to vary bail treated as a fresh application for bail – compelling reason established on basis of likely delay alone – unacceptable risk not demonstrated – bail granted with one surety in the sum of $15,000 but otherwise more extensive and rigorous conditions than those set by the magistrate).
* *Re Mourad* [2021] VSC 497 (Coghlan JA-34 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a drug of dependence – at the time he was on bail for other drug related matters – compelling reason made out based on delay).
* *Re Dylan Goodwin* [2021] VSC 504 (Coghlan JA-26 year old applicant charged with trafficking in a drug of dependence – compelling reason made out on the basis of “the question of strength of the prosecution case, the criminal history of the applicant, family support, the availability of treatment, delay, the likely sentence that the applicant might receive and the onerous conditions whilst in custody” – “the well-known risks…associated with people who have drug addictions can be rendered not unacceptable with the imposition of appropriate conditions”).
* *Re Foord* [2021] VSC 513 (Coghlan JA-31 year old applicant charged with trafficking in methylamphetamine, possessing methylamphetamine x 2, knowingly dealing with the proceeds of crime and possessing a prohibited weapon without exemption – compelling reason made out, albeit “by not much margin” on the basis of the matters set out in [23]-[29], including proposed residence with his mother and the provision of a $10,000 surety by her – the significant risk that “somebody who has been on a 10 year path of drug addiction to methylamphetamine” can be made acceptable by the imposition of appropriate conditions, in particular the offering of a surety by his mother).
* *Re Jock* [2021] VSC 561 (Lasry J-23 year old applicant charged with intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence and affray – compelling reason established based on delay, the impact of COVID-19, parity, supports in the community and provision of a surety by the applicant’s mother – unacceptable risk not demonstrated).
* *Re Tito* [2021] VSC 574 (Coghlan JA-33 year old applicant charged with making threat to kill intentionally/recklessly cause injury/assault in circumstances of family violence – strong support of partner – potential delay due to COVID-19 – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not demonstrated).
* *Re DK* [2021] VSC 596 (Jane Dixon J-35 year old applicant charged with trafficking cocaine and other offences – only matter in dispute is amount of surety – compelling reason exists – a “surety amount of $10,000.00 together with other agreed conditions are satisfactory to ameliorate risk to an acceptable level”).
* *Re Russell* [2021] VSC 657 (Tinney J-40 year old applicant mother of 3 children and some criminal history but little for violence charged with false imprisonment, intentionally causing injury, perjury and other charges – compelling reason made out comprising likely long delay, primary carer of her 3 children, onerous custodial conditions due to COVID-19, strong family and other supports and a surety of $50,000 – unacceptable risk not made out – bail granted).
* *Re Bradley* [2021] VSC 663 (Niall JA-24 year old applicant with relatively minor criminal history charged with “a slew of offences…between October 2019 and May 2021 which range in seriousness” – compelling reason established by combination of (1) likely delay; (2) prison conditions impacted by pandemic; (3) applicant is pregnant; (4) continued incarceration would impede reunification between applicant and her children aged 6 & 1; (5) first time in custody – risk ameliorated by imposition of stringent conditions).
* *Re Schwarzenberg* [2021] VSC 710 (Coghlan JA-60 year old applicant, a self-employed fisherman, charged with trafficking in and possession of a drug of dependence – compelling reasons established by combination of delay, inability to support family financially while in custody, unlikelihood of receiving a term of imprisonment greater than the time already spent on remand and applicant’ mental health – also undertaking received from applicant’s partner that she would report to the informant any breach of bail conditions by applicant – risk of reoffending can be made acceptable by conditions).
* *Re KI* [2021] VSC 736 (Lasry J-21 year old applicant charged with criminal damage in family violence circumstances and contravening a conduct condition of bail – compelling reasons conceded by respondent – probability applicant would spend more time on remand than term of imprisonment (if any) if bail not granted – first time in custody – unacceptable risk not demonstrated – bail granted on conditions).
* *Re AMR* [2021] VSC 743 (Coghlan JA- 30 year old applicant with an acquired brain injury charged with trafficking in a drug of dependence and dangerous driving while being pursued by police – compelling reason established by availability of supports while on bail and delay – bail granted with surety and on conditions – at [22] Coghlan JA said: “I make it clear that, had it not been for the fact that I have concluded that there is a very strong likelihood of any sentence being exceeded by the period on remand, I would have regarded the applicant as an unacceptable risk and I would have refused him bail.”)
* *Re Madden* [2021] VSC 817 (Niall JA-36 year old Aboriginal man who was on a CCO was charged with intentionally causing injury, making threat to kill, unlawful assault with a weapon and using a controlled weapon – the victim was the applicant’s neighbour – applicant has a lengthy criminal history as well as a history of mental health issues, trauma, using methamphetamine, alcohol and cannabis – he also has diagnoses of borderline personality disorder, depression and anxiety – compelling reasons established for a combination of reasons including suitability for CISP supervision and CISP support for applicant’s engagement with Barwon Health, delay and COVID conditions in custody).
* *Re Anderson* [2021] VSC 835 (Niall JA-39 year old applicant, with a very bad criminal history associated with long term drug use particularly methylamphetamine, charged with theft, arson, burglary, criminal damage and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – no unacceptable risk – bail granted with conditions including the proposed residential rehabilitation program at The Bridge).
* *Re Barahona* [2021] VSC 852 (Niall JA-30 year old applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering life, making threat to kill, unlawful assault, criminal damage, reckless conduct endangering serious injury and recklessly causing injury – finding of compelling reason ultimately not opposed – not unacceptable risk – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re MD* [2021] VSC 872 (Lasry J-32 year old applicant charged with contravening a family violence intervention order, unlawful assault, criminal damage, reckless conduct endangering serious injury, committing indictable offence while on bail, possessing weapons and driving offending — contested hearing already commenced — strength of the prosecution case — mental health of applicant — onerous custodial conductions due to COVID-19 pandemic — possibility applicant would spend more time remanded in custody than term of imprisonment imposed upon a finding of guilt — compelling reasons established — unacceptable risk not demonstrated — bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Rye* [2021] VSC 875 (Coghlan JA-29 year old applicant charged with possession of drugs of dependence, possession of controlled weapon, possession of prohibited weapon and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – compelling reason made out based on the high likelihood of the applicant serving a longer time in custody than he would be likely to receive by way of sentence – no unacceptable risk).
* *Re Tran* [2022] VSC 2 (Whelan JA-23 year old applicant charged with aggravated burglary, kidnapping, threats and assaults – no prior convictions – delay – compelling reasons established – unacceptable risk not demonstrated – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re ML* [2022] VSC 10 (Lasry J-41 year old applicant charged with persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order and contravention of a family violence intervention order intending to cause harm or fear – possibility that any custodial sentence would be served before the *de novo* appeal against a magistrate’s finding was heard – compelling reason shown – no unacceptable risk with release on conditional bail, including a surety and a treatment condition).
* *Re Oberin* [2022] VSC 17 (Priest JA-31 year old applicant changed with manslaughter – prosecution case described by Priest JA as “fraught with conceptual and practical difficulties” – compelling reason established “principally (although not solely) as a result…of the weakness of the prosecution case” – no relevant priors, long history of stable self-employment, family support and a stable residence – no unacceptable risk).
* *Re Buckingham* [2022] VSC 18 (Champion J-22 year old applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering serious injury, assault and making threats to kill – drug use and mental health concerns – significant delay until trial – compelling reasons established – unacceptable risk not established – bail granted with conditions including residence at Gippsland Youth Residential Rehabilitation Centre for 3 month program unless ordered otherwise by the Court).
* *Re ATL* [2022] VSC 104 (Jane Dixon J-the applicant, a 23-year old woman with an established diagnosis of schizophrenia since she was 17 years old, was charged with intentionally causing injury and other offences – recent non-compliance with medication – after arrest she spent 4 weeks at the forensic mental health unit at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre – no criminal history – first time in custody – strong family support – bail granted with judicial monitoring and rigorous and comprehensive conditions including a voluntary treatment regime).
* *Re CL* [2022] VSC 151 (Jane Dixon J-the applicant, a 41 year old Aboriginal woman, was charged with burglary and theft of firearms – significantly lesser role than coaccused and as such an open question whether if she were sentenced in light of the significant personal challenges she has faced in recent years, coupled with potential *Bugmy* and *Verdins* mitigatory factors, she would ultimately be sentenced to a longer term of imprisonment than she has already spent on remand – compelling reason established – bail granted with stringent conditions).
* *Re Brown* [2022] VSC 166 (Lasry J-the applicant, a 51 year old Aboriginal man, was charged withstalking, using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence, intimidating a law enforcement officer or family member of a law enforcement officer, harassing a witness, contravening a conduct condition of bail, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and contravening a personal safety intervention order — applicant targeted police officers and other public servants — exceptional circumstances conceded by the respondent — applicant gave affirmed undertaking from witness box at the hearing to desist from offending behaviour — unacceptable risk not established – bail granted with conditions).
* *Re Rafik* [2022] VSC 279 (Taylor J-33 year old Burmese Rohingya born applicant charged with manslaughter – compelling reason established by: (1) respondent concession that the applicant has “a viable case of self-defence” (2) behaviour of the applicant in custody has been good (3) applicant had reported to CCS that he was using heroin and methylamphetamine every second day at the time of the alleged offending and although he has been sober in custody the treatment and rehabilitation options available to him in the community are far greater than those available to him in custody — risk of endangering the safety and welfare of any person and committing an offence while on bail can be rendered acceptable by the imposition of appropriate bail conditions).
* *Re KF* [2022] VSC 349 (Jane Dixon J-47 year old Wamba Wamba woman charged with aggravated burglary, intentionally causing serious injury and related charges – applicant had already spent 485 days in custody and her mother and daughter have both passed away whilst she has been in custody – mental health issues and trauma background and lengthy criminal history – compelling reason established – s.3A of the **BA** centrally relevant to the consideration of unacceptable risk in this case – Bail granted on stringent conditions).
* *Re Sofele* [2022] VSC 409 (Champion J-26 year old man with no criminal history charged with multiple weapons, violence and theft offences – applicant has stable accommodation where he has lived with his partner and their 4 children for 3 years – application is supported by applicant’s partner who is suffering from ‘post-natal depression/severe stress’ and has a very young child to care for – compelling reasons found, “the medical circumstances pertaining to the applicant’s wife [being] a powerful factor in support of this application” – conditions can be attached to a grant of bail so as to ameliorate any risk to a level that is acceptable).
* *Re Ali* [2022] VSC 581 (Champion J-29 year old man charged with armed robbery, robbery, intentionally causing injury, recklessly causing injury — availability of stable employment, accommodation and community support — strength of prosecution case — compelling reason found — risk not unacceptable with conditions).
* *Re LU (Youth)* [2022] VSC 644 (Jane Dixon J-17 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with family violence offences whilst already on bail for violence offence – no criminal history – mental health vulnerability – entire family attended court and demonstrated strong willingness to offer ongoing supervision and support – very comprehensive Youth Justice support plan – first time in custody – respondent ultimately conceded that a non-custodial disposition may be within range if LU was found guilty of the offences charged – compelling reason shown – risk not unacceptable provided strict conditions in place – bail granted).
* *Re John Booth* [2022] VSC 657 (Croucher J-44 year old man with substantial criminal history and history of illicit drug use charged with trafficking (*simpliciter*) in and possession of methamphetamine, possession of 1,4 butanediol and dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime – support of CISP and drug counselling – stable address with his mother in a rural area – contestable issue on trafficking charge – delay of 2 years until trial – if bail were refused, period in custody is likely to exceed any non-parole period imposed if found guilty as charged – compelling reason established – unacceptable risk not established – bail granted on surety of $10,000 with conditions).
* *Re JK (a pseudonym)* [2022] VSC 714 (Croucher J-57 year old man with no prior convictions charged with assault with intent to commit sexual act, recklessly causing injury and threat to commit a sexual offence – serious but bizarre allegations, applicant allegedly declaring to his 77 year old mother-in-law: “I want to make the sex with you” and punched her repeatedly, breaking her nose – applicant was psychotic at the time but is not now – applicant suffering profound grief over death of wife a year earlier — whether psychosis drug-induced or resulted endogenously from mental illness — psychologist opines drug-induced psychosis — family violence intervention orders now in place — support of CISP and treatment by psychologist — contestable issues on *mens rea* and mental impairment — delay of 12 months between arrest and contested hearing in Magistrates’ Court — If bailed refused, period in custody very likely to exceed any prison sentence (if imprisoned at all), if charges proved — compelling reason established — conditions of bail and other factors render risks acceptable).
* *Re Benjamin Williams* [2022] VSC 712 (Tinney J-alleged armed robbery by 30-year-old applicant of his mother – no relevant criminal history – Court Integrated Services Program support on offer – respondent conceded it would be open to the Court to find a compelling reason and that risk posed could be ameliorated by the imposition of strict conditions).
* *Re O’Connell* [2023] VSC 726 (Elliott J-33 year old applicant charged with importing a commercial quantity of border controlled drugs (GBL, ketamine & amphetamine) and related offences – Schedule 2 offences – compelling reason shown by the combination of the 9 matters detailed in [41] – any risk can be ameliorated with appropriate conditions – bail granted).
* *Re Pecori* [2023] VSC 777 (Tinney J-23 year old applicant with no prior convictions charged with rape, intentionally causing serious injury and reckless conduct engaging life – first time in custody – strong family support – long-term treatment for psychological issues – compelling reason established – condition that applicant would live far away from the area of his offending and the home of the complainant and creation of an exclusion zone to enforce geographic separation – bail granted on stringent conditions).
* *Re Mangion* [2024] VSC 23 (Champion J- 28 year old female applicant with mild intellectual disability, a history of drug use and mental health issues but no criminal history charged with 4 charges of sexually penetrating a child or lineal descendant; 2 charges of producing child abuse material and 2 charges of administering an intoxicating substance for a sexual purpose – applicant intends to contest the charges on the basis of alleged duress by the co-accused who is her former partner and the father of one of her children – support from ACSO and Flat Out – family support and stable accommodation – compelling reasons satisfied – unacceptable risk not found – bail granted with strict conditions).
* *Re Wills* [2024] VSC 168 (Kaye JA- 28 year old applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering serious injury, recklessly causing injury, unlawful imprisonment, contravention of family violence prevention orders and dangerous driving – compelling reason established by a combination of factors, including no previous criminal convictions, regular engagement in gainful employment, appropriate family support, appropriate support services supervised by the CISP program, potential delay such that there is a realistic possibility that if not granted bail, the time spent on remand would exceed the term of any custodial sentence if he was found guilty of the charges – if released on bail with appropriate conditions there was not an unacceptable risk that the applicant would endanger the safety or welfare of others or interfere with witnesses).
* *Re CR* [2024] VSC 197 (Fox J- 44 year old applicant charged with contravening a family violence intervention order [FVIO], persistently contravening a FVIO and stalking – alleged victim is the applicant’s estranged husband – the estranged husband and 5 children are protected by the FVIO and the children are also subject to interim accommodation orders imposed by the Children’s Court – applicant has a very limited, albeit relevant, criminal history and it is her first time in custody – she has suitable and stable accommodation, no drug or alcohol issues and family support and is very unlikely to receive a custodial sentence if found guilty – her mental health is poor but she is undergoing treatment – compelling reason conceded by respondent – applicant is not an unacceptable risk if released on bail with a substantial bail guarantee and strict conditions).
* *Re Harris* [2024] VSC 226 (Beale J- 43 year old applicant with no prior convictions charged with assaulting members of his family, resisting and assaulting the police who attended his home and took him to Monash Hospital, making a threat to a hospital nurse that he would return home and kill his family and assaulting a hospital security guard – compelling reasons justifying a grant of bail conceded by respondent – applicant’s wife and father (who were two of the victims) support the applicant’s wish to be bailed to the Hader Clinic in Geelong where he can receive intensive psychological, psychiatric and therapeutic inpatient treatment as does the applicant’s psychiatrist who has been working with the applicant since mid-2023 – in granting bail on strict conditions Beale J said at [28]: “I am mindful of the enormous and legitimate public alarm about domestic violence. Nonetheless, each bail application has to be assessed on its own merits applying the tests prescribed by the Bail Act 1977. I am not persuaded by the respondent that bailing Mr Harris to the Hader Clinic in Geelong constitutes an unacceptable risk.”
* *Re Ninua* [2024] VSC 391 (Elliott J – 38 year old applicant charged with armed robbery and other indictable offences involving the use of threatened use of an offensive weapon – strength of prosecution case – limited criminal history – personal circumstances – availability of stable accommodation & bail support service – compelling reason established by a combination of anticipated delay, the health of the applicant and his mother and the applicant’s proposal of a condition of bail involving a significant electronic monitoring arrangement through BailSafe – applicant not an unacceptable risk – bail granted).
* *Re Liang* [2024] VSC 416 (Elliott J – 24 year old applicant charged with aggravated burglary and persistent contravention of family violence notices and intervention orders – complainant presently outside jurisdiction – anticipated delay – whether time spent on remand likely to outweigh any term of imprisonment – availability of stable accommodation and bail guarantee – compelling reason established by a combination of the matters detailed in [68]-[73] & [79] – bail granted until 19/07/2024 – *Re Liang (No 2)* [2024] VSC 426 (Bail granted again subject to terms similar to those in [2024] VSC 416).
* *Re Jal* [2024] VSC 539 (Croucher J – 27 year old applicant charged with armed robbery, possess unregistered handgun and intentionally causing serious injury – police allege applicant with his brother and another passenger exited a car in Dandenong and the passenger discharged a sawn‑off shotgun into the air — applicant then approached complainant and swung him by shoulder bag, causing him to drop bag and applicant’s shoe to fall off — complainant fled and applicant’s brother chased him — while applicant put on shoe and picked up the comb he dropped, his brother caught the complainant and hit him twice to the head with handgun, knocking him unconscious — brother then took the bag — the incident was in part recorded on CCTV — the applicant was arrested two months later — hours before the incident, the applicant had been robbed of his phone which he reported to police later on day of alleged offences — applicant lives with mother and seven siblings, had completed a university degree and was employed full-time — his mother was dependent on financial and other assistance from applicant — no criminal history; only prior engagement in ROPES program as a child on charges including recklessly causing serious injury, nearly ten years ago — significant weaknesses in Crown case including on identity, claim of right, contemporaneity and complicity — compelling reason established for the reasons detailed at [64], the most compelling of which is “the strength or otherwise of the Crown case” — asserted risk not unacceptable — bail granted on own undertaking with conditions).
* *Re Robinson* [2025] VSC 181 (Gorton J – 42 year old applicant charged with intentionally causing serious injury in a violent incident that took place in a hospital – no criminal history or history of violence – evidence that violent incident took place during postictal delirium – triable issue whether conduct was conscious, voluntary and deliberate – low risk of future violent conduct – accommodation had been secured if bail granted – compelling reasons established – not an unacceptable risk – bail granted on conditions).

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### **9.4.2.3 SOME CASES IN WHICH A COMPELLING REASON WAS SHOWN BUT BAIL WAS REFUSED BECAUSE ACCUSED DEEMED AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK**

*Re Dib*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Lasry J]

[2019] VSC 11

The 33 year old applicant was charged with 23 offences including stalking, using a carriage service to harass, threatening to inflict serious injury x 2, theft of a motor vehicle, handling stolen goods, driving while disqualified x 2, reckless endangering life and using a handgun without a licence. It was agreed between the parties that his offences fell within Schedule 2 of the **BA**. The application was opposed although “the respondent effectively conceded that a compelling reason had been established based on the considerations identified in ss.3AAA(1)(k)-(l) of the **BA**…[namely] there was a real likelihood that, if refused bail, the applicant would spend longer in custody than he would be likely to be sentenced to by a court for these offences.” Based on that and on the applicant’s obligations to support his family and business interstate, his Honour found that a compelling reason was established. However, the applicant’s prior criminal and bail history demonstrated an indifference to orders of courts and his Honour considered that proposed conditions of bail did not mitigate to unacceptable the risk of the applicant endangering the safety of another, committing another offence, obstructing justice or failing to surrender. Hence bail was refused.

*Re Hughes*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Lasry J]

[2019] VSC 750

The 35 year old applicant, who had been diagnosed with schizoaffective illness and bipolar type episodes, was receiving compulsory inpatient treatment for an episode of psychosis and was subject to a community treatment order, was charged with assault and threatening to assault his treating psychiatrist. He had an extensive criminal history and a history of breaching court orders. Applying dicta of Beach, Kaye and Ashley JJA in *Rodgers v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 214 as to the relevant principles when considering the compelling reason test, Lasry J found that test was satisfied by virtue of the applicant’s mental health. However his Honour was satisfied that “consideration of the surrounding circumstances, coupled with the applicant’s significant history of noncompliance with court orders and his criminal history”, rendered the risk of releasing him on bail unacceptable.

*Re Richardson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Taylor J]

[2020] VSC 289

The 40 year old applicant was charged with 19 offences including intentionally causing injury, assault with a weapon, aggravated burglary, stalking, attempting to pervert the course of justice and harassing a witness. Considering all of the surrounding circumstances, her Honour was persuaded that a best case minimum delay of two and a half years to a trial date coupled with the currently restrictive nature of custodial arrangements as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic did demonstrate a compelling reason that justifies the grant of bail. However, the applicant had been charged a total of 458 times by police. His adult criminal history dated from 1998 and included convictions for burglary, armed robbery, intentionally causing injury, false imprisonment and trafficking methylamphetamine. He also had an extensive history of driving offences, seven prior convictions for failing to answer bail, seven convictions for committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and one prior conviction for contravening a condition of bail. He had been named as the respondent to intervention orders 20 times. He had served several periods of imprisonment. Her Honour stated at [75]: “[H]is demonstrated history of failing to answer bail and committing further offences on bail tells against any reasonable expectation that he will surrender into custody in accordance with bail conditions. The applicant has, over many years, disregarded the authority of the police and courts. He is adept at making himself difficult to find.” Accordingly her Honour was satisfied that he was an unacceptable risk and bail was refused.

*Re Lowe*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Tinney J]

[2020] VSC 584

The 35 year old applicant was facing charges including armed robber, theft, burglary and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. A handgun was allegedly used in the armed robbery. The applicant was on two grants of bail at the time and had a significant criminal history including breaches of court orders. His trial was not likely to be heard for almost 3 years. Compelling reason was established. However he had no formal bail support and there was a lack of stability in the arrangements proposed should he be released on bail. Accordingly he was held to be an unacceptable risk and bail was refused.

*Re Gastello*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Whelan JA]

[2021] VSC 861

The 43 year old applicant, a dual citizen of Australia and Peru, was charged with rape x 2 and two related charges in relation to one complainant, two charges of sexual offending against two other complainants and one charge of knowingly possessing child abuse material – compelling reason established by “the extraordinary delay, through no fault of the applicant, between the initial report and the applicant being charged, combined with the likely delay before there can be a trial due to the COVID-19 pandemic” – however “there is a significant risk that the applicant would, if released on bail, endanger another person…and commit an offence while on bail…[he] has demonstrated sexual proclivities which represent a risk to women with whom he comes into contact, and not just to those with whom he might be residing.”

*Re VR*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Lasry J]

[2021] VSC 873

The 46 year old applicant with a significant prior criminal history was charged with reckless conduct endangering life and serious injury, false imprisonment, threat to kill and inflict serious injury, assault and contravening a family violence intervention order – applicant and complainant had been “in an on-off relationship characterised by family violence for 3 years” – reciprocal full non-contact FVIOs were in place at the time of the alleged offending – a toxic relationship described by the informant as “a homicide waiting to happen” – there was no statement of the complainant in the brief of evidence – compelling reason established “on the basis of significant problems with the prosecution case” – however the applicant has no fixed bail address available and the applicant poses a significant risk of endangering the complainant’s welfare, a risk that cannot be ameliorated by the imposition of conditions.

*Re Stephan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Fox J]

[2022] VSC 130

The 48 year old applicant with relevant prior convictions including use of a firearm was charged with kidnapping, blackmail, intentionally causing injury, threat to kill, threat to inflict serious injury, assault, reckless conduct endangering life, unlawful discharge of a firearm at premises and damaging property. Applying *Rodgers v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 214 her Honour found a compelling reason constituted by delay together with the more onerous conditions on remand due to COVID-19. However, noting the applicant’s history of non-compliance with both parole and a CCO and that the firearm used in the alleged offending had not been recovered, her Honour was satisfied on balance that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of further offending and endangering the safety and welfare of any person if he was released on bail, notwithstanding the availability of electronic monitoring by a private company.

*Re SY*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Jane Dixon J]

[2022] VSC 125

The 30 year old applicant was charged with alleged offences involving family violence against his wife, including 4 charges of reckless conduct involving strangulation and 5 charges of assault (one involving a belt, one a conducted energy device and one a knife). Her Honour found a compelling reason constituted by the applicant being a hard worker who would be gainfully employed if granted bail, the courses that he has completed while in custody, the available bail support services, the support he has from his mother and siblings and the availability of a stable address and a substantial surety if granted bail. However, notwithstanding that the complainant “expressed support for the applicant being granted bail in the expectation she will be able to access savings accounts and that he will provide assistance for the children”, her Honour was ultimately not persuaded that conditions of bail would sufficiently ameliorate the risk of further offending against the complainant to an acceptable level. In so deciding, her Honour noted at [74]-[75] that “the alleged offending represents very serious family violence offending. The incidents of violence are alleged to have occurred against a background of coercive control, previous physical abuse, and financial control. The history, given by the complainant, of control within the relationship is supported by Olga L. In both instances, the alleged offences are said to have occurred in the context of the applicant becoming jealous and angry about the complainant’s contact with people outside of the family.”

*Re Thompson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Champion J]

[2023] VSC 274

The 39 year old applicant with no prior criminal history was charged with stalking, rape, assault, sexual assault, criminal damage and false imprisonment of his 30 year old ex-partner. A compelling reason was made out but bail was refused, his Honour stating at [124]: “In my opinion there is an unacceptable risk that if the applicant is released on bail he will commit a further offence whilst on bail and that this risk cannot be ameliorated to an acceptable level by the imposition of stringent conditions.”

*Re Rafat*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Champion J]

[2023] VSC 710

The 38 year old applicant with no prior criminal history was charged with rape by compelling sexual penetration, encouraging a child under the age of 16 to engage in, or be involved in, sexual activity, sexual assault and sexual exposure. The complainants are children aged 14, the offending is alleged to have occurred in a public park during daylight and the applicant is alleged to have followed the complainants after the incident as they contacted police. The applicant has a lack of insight into the seriousness of the alleged offending. The respondent conceded it was open to the court to find a compelling reason was made out and the Court so found. BailSafe GPS monitoring and a surety were available. However, bail was refused, his Honour holding at [101]-[104]:

“Ultimately I do not consider that sufficient conditions can be put in place to ameliorate the risk to an acceptable level for the following reasons:

1. “First, the nature and seriousness of the allegations are extremely concerning, as well as being of a somewhat unusual nature. The allegations include the use of intimidation, force, and the preparedness to use firm if not strong physical contact to carry out the behaviour alleged, in respect of two male children and one female child.”
2. “Second, I am not satisfied that the treatment proposed by Mr Hanley would significantly reduce the risk of the applicant committing sexual offences against children.”
3. “Third, in my opinion, the availability of GPS monitoring through the BailSafe program is not sufficient to ameliorate concerns about the applicant’s risk of future offending.”

### **9.4.2.4 SOME CASES IN WHICH COMPELLING REASON (CAUSE) WAS NOT SHOWN AND BAIL WAS REFUSED**

*DPP v Phillip Anthony Harika*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Gillard J]

[2001] VSC 237

DPP appeal against magistrate's decision to grant bail to 24 year old accused charged with armed robbery in circumstances where he threatened with a blood-filled syringe a woman who was 6 months pregnant. His Honour revoked the accused's bail, holding that the magistrate had failed to give any or any sufficient weight to the following factors and that accordingly her discretion had miscarried:

* the risk of re-offending;
* the prosecution case was very strong;
* the offences had been committed while the accused was on bail;
* the accused's appalling criminal record which included violent offending;
* the accused's history of failing to appear on bail at least 3 times;
* the accused's history of drug addiction; and
* the accused had breached previous court orders.

*DPP v Nathan Fallon*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J]

[2001] VSC 136

DPP appeal against magistrate's decision to grant bail on 27/02/2001 to a 20 year old accused charged with several different sets of offences:

1. 08/12/2000 arrested and bailed in relation to burglary and other property offences but failed to appear on 31/01/2001; was arrested on 10/02/2001 and re-bailed to 20/02/2001;
2. 13/01/2001 arrested and bailed in relation to 2 burglaries, thefts, car thefts & drug offences but failed to appear on 16/02/2001;
3. 10/02/2001 arrested and charged with 3 burglaries and 3 thefts;
4. 26/02/2001 charged with offences of handling stolen property (valued in excess of $70,000) which were allegedly committed on 08/02/2001.

The accused had received 6 Children's Court good behaviour bonds for 18 offences over 6 appearances between August 1993 & December 2000. His Honour revoked the accused's bail, holding that the accused "was clearly an unacceptable risk of committing further offences" and that "the order made by the Magistrate on 27/02/2001 to release the respondent on bail was manifestly the wrong order to make."

*DPP v Hop Nguyen*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Habersberger J]

[2004] VSC 302

The applicant, aged 22, had pleaded guilty to one count of armed robbery. Armed with a syringe filled with his own blood he approached a 72 year old grandmother walking on her own and carrying a bag over her shoulder, held up the syringe and demanded her bag. He then pulled the bag away from her and ran off but was chased by other people in the vicinity and caught and held until police arrived. The applicant had been involved with heroin use since about the time of leaving school and had a history of mental illness, possibly schizophrenia, for which he had received in-patient treatment. Habersberger J accepted that a comprehensive support network could be put in place, including drug treatment, family support, family accommodation, psychiatric services. The applicant had been in custody for 3 months and had made 2 unsuccessful applications for bail in the Magistrates' Court. In holding that the applicant had not shown cause and refusing bail, his Honour said at [14]-[16]:

"My concern is that, given that within seven days of being released from the psychiatric institution he committed this offence, presumably having resumed heroin use, that the same will occur were I to release him on bail.

The circumstances of the cowardly attack on the elderly lady are such that the ground in the *Bail Act* which requires the applicant to persuade me that he is not an unacceptable risk that if released on bail he would endanger the safety or welfare of members of the public weighs very heavily in my mind.

The onus being on the applicant to show cause, I regret to say that in the circumstances of this sad case I am not persuaded that he is not an unacceptable risk of either re-offending or endangering the safety or welfare of members of the public. Indeed, I am satisfied that there is such a risk."

*Benito Maccia*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J]

[2002] VSC 205

The applicant, aged 62, was charged with 27 offences, including incitement to murder, extortion, stalking and criminal damage in circumstances in which it was alleged he had hired a co-accused to extort money from members of one family. The co-accused had pleaded guilty, had been sentenced to 4 years imprisonment and had indicated an intention to give evidence against the applicant. The 3 matters on which the applicant relied were:

* his age, lack of priors and personal circumstances;
* the financial deterioration of his business; and
* delay in the provision of tapes and transcripts which had the consequence of delaying the trial.

These matters were held not to be sufficient to show cause, particularly given the strength of the Crown case, the likely term of imprisonment and the risk of interference with witnesses.

*Harry Buckle*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Kellam J]

[2003] VSC 352

The applicant, aged 51 and with no prior convictions, was charged with conspiracy to cause an explosion and other offences related to possession of explosives, allegedly to cause serious damage to the premises of a business rival. Relied on in support of his application were his age, lack of priors, long marriage with 3 children, the effect on his family and his business of his incarceration, his depressive illness and likely delay before trial. Refusing bail, Kellam J said: "[W]here the case against the applicant is, in my view, strong, where there is a high probability that he will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of some considerable length if convicted, where the potential for harm caused by his alleged behaviour was great, and where [his] alleged behaviour was highly unpredictable and irrational, but at the same time apparently carefully planned, the applicant has failed to allay the concerns which induced the legislature to refuse bail in these circumstances and he has failed to show cause why his detention in custody is not justified."

*Ian David Peter Dauer*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Nathan J, {MC2/85}, 23/02/1985]

The accused, a police officer, was charged with 2 sets of offences: (1) kidnap, false imprisonment and assault occasioning actual bodily harm; (2) conspiracy to pervert course of justice, theft & deception. He had made 5 unsuccessful bail applications to the Supreme Court. At the end of a committal on the first set of charges, a magistrate granted bail. On DPP appeal, bail was revoked. Nathan J said:

"The learned magistrate should have given great weight to the fact that 3 judges of this Court, on a fact situation…in no way markedly different…were of the view that the seriousness of the threats made by Dauer in respect of Crown witnesses was sufficiently close and proximate as to constitute an unacceptable risk and to result in the refusal of the bail application."

Nathan J also held that the magistrate "fell into error" when determining that the risk of interference with witnesses should be balanced against deprivation of the accused's liberty which was already quite lengthy:

"[I]t is an absolute point for him to consider whether the witnesses are at risk or not. That is not to be balanced by way of some process against the liberty or otherwise of the accused man. The proximity of the risk is to be objectively assessed and if it is unacceptable, then indeed bail should be refused."

His Honour also considered that the Magistrate:

* had failed to take properly into account the nature and seriousness of the offences or the strength of the evidence against the accused;
* had misdirected himself on the possible length of the delay before the matter came to trial and the conditions of the remand facilities at Pentridge.

*Michael Hall*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coldrey J, unreported, 04/03/1997]

The applicant had been charged with 8 counts of armed robbery, 2 counts of car theft and one of robbery. He had been a heavy heroin user for many years with numerous prior convictions (including 11 for fail to appear) and may have owed the Parole Board 18 months. He had been assessed as suitable for treatment as an inpatient at Odyssey House. Previously he had been an inpatient at Windana and had discharged himself twice. His Honour held that the applicant had failed to show cause and there was an unacceptable risk that he would fail to appear on bail.

*Mustafa Tilki*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Warren CJ]

[2003] VSC 483

The applicant had been charged with aggravated burglary, two counts of conduct endangering life, three counts of common law assault and two offences under the Firearms Act. He was required to show cause under s.4(4)(c) of the **BA** because of the nature of the charges. He had a number of prior convictions dating back to 1990. The Crown opposed bail on the sole ground that there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant, if released, would interfere with witnesses. The main factors relied on by the applicant were delay and the poor prospects of the case being found proved against him in view of the statements made by the victims. In refusing bail, the Chief Justice said at [12]:

"[T]he applicant engaged in a terrifying sequence of events. These circumstances of themselves demonstrate a propensity to resort to violence. In the course of the circumstances of the allegation the applicant used a gun and, worse, pointed the gun at the head of another. This demonstrates the potential of the applicant to cause serious physical and/or mental injury to a victim. These circumstances of themselves dissuade me from sufficient satisfaction that the applicant has shown cause."

At [13] the Chief Justice agreed with the prosecutor that the appropriate time to consider the applicant's submission on potential delay was after the committal.

*DPP v Haidy*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Redlich J]

[2004] VSC 247

The applicant had been charged with trafficking in cannabis and associated charges alleged to have been committed while he was on bail on similar charges of trafficking in cannabis. He failed to show cause. In refusing bail, Redlich J said at [10]:

"[I]t would be quite common to find that the family of an alleged offender suffers hardship and distress as a consequence of the offender being detained in custody. To constitute sufficient cause to grant bail, something more is required than the financial and emotional hardship experienced by the Applicant’s family as a consequence of his absence."

See also *Re Michael Barbaro* [2004] VSC 404 at [13] per Morris J.

*Peter Alan Heenan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Whelan J]

[2005] VSC 49

The 51 year old applicant, a successful businessman, was charged with a number of offences including attempted murder, intentionally causing serious injury, aggravated burglary, false imprisonment and rape. The principal victim was his estranged wife. The applicant had a very extensive history of driving offences and at the time of the alleged offences against his wife he was serving a 6 month period of imprisonment by way of intensive correction order. Counsel for the applicant referred to him as “a man of means, steady employment, fixed accommodation, and strong connections to Melbourne”. Categorizing the applicant as a man with “a demonstrated history of failing to comply with requirements placed upon him by the law”, Whelan J held-

1. that there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant would commit offences or interfere with a witness; and
2. applying dicta of Gillard J in *DPP v Harika* [2001] VSC 237 at [63]-[64], that the applicant had not shown cause why his detention in custody was not justified.

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2005] VSC 516

On a further application for bail some 10 months later Bongiorno J also held that the applicant had not shown cause why his detention in custody was not justified.

*DPP v Henderson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2005] VSC 512

The applicant, described as a “career criminal”, had been on remand awaiting trial on charges including trafficking in drugs of addiction, possession of a number of unregistered firearms and 14 counts of handling stolen goods. He had been on remand for 21 months and his trial was not fixed for 4 more months. He was in a show cause situation and he had a lengthy criminal history. Although holding that “the delay to which Mr Henderson has been subjected is unacceptable” and that “delay itself can, in some circumstances, constitute just cause and even exceptional circumstances in relation to the question of bail”, His Honour held that in light of the charges he was facing, his antecedents and the fear of the informant in respect of witnesses, the applicant had not shown cause.

*Michael Paterson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Gillard J]

[2006] VSC 268

The applicant, aged 39, was charged with two categories of offences. The first was one count of burglary and two counts of theft which allegedly occurred on 24/05/2001. The second was one count of making a threat to kill, one count of recklessly threatening serious injury and one count of harassing a witness. The victim was Constable Shannon Thompson and the alleged offences occurred after a hearing was completed in Geelong Magistrates’ Court involving the applicant’s defacto wife. The applicant had been in custody since 11/01/2006. A trial on the second offences was listed in a further 6 weeks. The applicant had been refused bail on 24/02/2006 by the Geelong Magistrates’ Court and in the Supreme Court on 12/04/2006 by Osborn J. He had numerous prior convictions, commencing with a Children’s Court appearance when he was aged 13. He had 15 pages of priors. Gillard J said: “His criminal record is appalling.” In refusing bail Gillard J said at [11]-[12]:

“The matter of substantial concern is the applicant’s past history of failing to answer bail. He has been involved in court appearances going back over many years for failing to appear whilst on bail. [His Honour listed 12 such failures]…[I]t is a bleak history and shows that a person who thumbs his nose at authority must be a matter of grave concern on any application for bail.”

*David Peter O’Blein v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2009] VSC 6

The 20 year old applicant was charged with armed robbery, theft and possession of an unregistered firearm. His Honour found that the applicant was an unacceptable risk and regretfully refused bail while commenting that it was unfortunate that the system does not allow someone the applicant’s age to be remanded in a youth training centre pending trial:

[5] “His personal history is tragic, as is the case with so many young men who find themselves in his position. He was a ward of the State from a very young age until he turned 18, and, in that capacity, was housed and, ostensibly, at least, cared for by a large number of different people. A psychologist who has examined him said that he told him that he had been in 80 foster homes! Whether that is hyperbole or not, it would at least give some indication of his tragic upbringing. He complained to the psychologist of having been sexually assaulted by his grandfather, and, in more recent times, being the subject of hallucinations. At the age of 16 he fathered a child with a young woman. This child died, tragically, very shortly after birth.

[6] The result of this is that, by the age of 20, he has accumulated a large number of prior convictions, some of them, if not in the most serious categories, are certainly anti-social behaviour which the community cannot and will not tolerate.

[7] The submission put on his behalf is that it is possible that when he goes before the County Court in five or six weeks time, the judge will deal with him by way of youth training centre disposition; that his present conditions are inappropriate at Port Phillip Prison; that he has been the subject of assaults, the latest indeed within the last 24 hours; and that he ought to be bailed in the meantime.

[8] It is indeed unfortunate that the system does not provide for someone of his age to be able to be remanded in a youth training centre pending his trial. But that is apparently the situation. The difficulty he faces here is that he must demonstrate that his continued incarceration is not justified. Such justification might be found if one could be satisfied that he did not present an unacceptable risk of doing one or other of the things which remand in custody pending appearance in Court is designed to avoid, namely, the commission of offences, absconding, and interference with witnesses. There is probably no real problem concerning witnesses, although the police informant seemed to think that there was. In a case where an accused is going to plead guilty one can hardly think that there is likely to be. Except where there is a most irrational motive to interfere with witnesses.

[9] However, this young man’s history gives one no confidence that he will not offend whilst he is on bail…

[10] The community must be protected. Whilst one can have every sympathy with the appalling way in which this young man was brought up by the State, that is not an excuse, even if might be a reason. In the circumstances I am not satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated that his continued incarceration is unjustified and accordingly bail with be refused.”

*Darren Haffner v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Coghlan J]

[2009] VSC 116

The applicant was charged with armed robbery and theft. He was on two sets of bail at the time of being charged and was therefore in a show cause position. He had breached his previous bail by not residing at the stated residence, failing to report and associating with co-accused. He had a significant criminal history. His Honour refused bail, holding that the applicant had not shown cause and also holding that “the applicant represents an unacceptable risk of re-offending, particularly when his pattern of alleged offending is examined”.

*Julie Huynh*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Cummins J]

[2009] VSC 163

The applicant aged 28 was charged with intentionally causing serious injury, alternatively recklessly causing serious injury, to her 3½ year old daughter and with perjury and perverting the course of justice. She had been in custody for 15 months. A committal was listed in 2 months’ time. Referring to the analysis of Kellam J in *Mokbel v DPP (No 3)* (2002) 133 A Crim R 141 at 142-143 and the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Commonwealth DPP v. Barbaro (Attorney-General for Vic. Intervening)* [2009] VSCA 26 at [41] Cummins J said at [4]: “The present matter has been the subject of extensive delay, which is a matter which has concerned me.” Nevertheless, his Honour considered that the applicant had failed to show cause why she ought to be granted bail, saying at [16] & [18]:

“It is for the Magistrate to determine at committal, which is two months' time, the question of the strength of the case against the applicant. I cannot do so at this juncture where I simply look at the papers…

I do not rest upon risk of flight or interference with witnesses. Rather, I consider the gravity of the charges against her, the nature and ambit of the case against her if proved, and the circularity afflicting the case put presently by the applicant as to her not being the inflictor of injuries not being a full answer to the charges, are such that the application ought to be refused.”

*Mohammad El Ali*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Curtain J]

[2013] VSC 216

The applicant aged 32 was charged with possession of material for the purposes of trafficking; possessing a prescribed precursor chemical; possessing a drug of dependence (amphetamine); trafficking a drug of dependence (amphetamine); unlicensed possession of ammunition; cultivating a narcotic plant and possessing the same; possessing a drug of dependence (MDMA); three charges of possession of an unregistered handgun; dealing with property suspected of being the proceeds of crime; three charges of being a prohibited person possessing a firearm and possessing a precursor chemical (iodine) in a quantity not less than the prescribed quantity. The offences arose from the police attendance at the applicant’s residence to check whether he was complying with bail conditions. They heard a commotion and a female in distress and upon entering the residence they found a large clandestine amphetamine laboratory. The applicant had been the subject of two intervention orders taken out by the very people whom it was proposed will support him if granted bail, his father and the mother of his children. Her Honour refused bail, stating at [20]:

“[T]he the history of significant drug use, combined with the fact that he was on bail for serious offences when he allegedly committed these serious offences, demonstrate that the applicant is an unacceptable risk of re-offending while on bail, in that he may either relapse into drug use and/or commit further offences.”

*Lirim Salievski*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bell J]

[2014] VSC 1 at [102]-[108]

The applicant who was aged 35y had been on remand for 6 months on charges including two counts of aggravated burglary, armed robbery, blackmail, extortion and using a firearm in the commission of an offence. In refusing bail, Bell J said at [108]:

“The charges brought against him are very serious and the circumstances alleged involve crimes of violence against persons and property using firearms and standover tactics. The applicant is a mature man and has an extensive criminal history. He has served several terms of imprisonment. Witnesses are fearful and reluctant to cooperate with police. On the current evidence, the applicant has not shown cause why his detention is not justified and, on what is presently before the court, I think he is an unacceptable risk. The conditions proposed do not satisfy me that he would not be an unacceptable risk. With the committal process about to commence, it is not appropriate that I should go deeply into the strength of the prosecution case. The committal magistrate will be in a better position to assess that. The applicant should not be granted bail in advance of the committal. The application is therefore dismissed.”

*Toby Mitchell*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, King J

[2015] VSC 144

The applicant was the former national sergeant at arms of the Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang and although no longer a part of that organisation, it was alleged by the police that he still has significant connections and associations to other outlaw motorcycle gangs and organised crime entities both domestically and internationally. He was charged with 17 charges, including 4 counts of extortion, blackmail and a number of counts of threat to kill or inflict injury. King J said of the Crown case: “On the material, I am not satisfied that it is a weak crown case, neither is it a strong one, it falls somewhere in the middle, and doesn’t significantly add or detract from the show cause situation.” However her Honour refused bail, saying at [62]:

“As indicated, it is my view that there are currently no conditions that will ameliorate, to an acceptable level, the risk of the applicant interfering with witnesses, and being involved in other crimes associated with that interference. I am not presuming that the applicant would perform any such task himself, but he is, as his counsel accurately expressed it, from a milieu that don’t respect or view the police in the same way as the majority of the community, they have a contempt for the police, and the laws they enforce. It is that connection and his ability to speak to those people, and organise or make arrangements concerning witnesses that cannot be controlled, as there are no conditions that can, in reality, control the phones on which he would or could speak if released on bail, the persons who he could contact and the arrangements he could make with those people. Whilst he is in custody, those matters are to a very large degree under surveillance. His calls are recorded, he is not able to mix with many other prisoners, and his visits are supervised and controlled.”

Her Honour added at [65]: “The matter of bail should be reconsidered by the magistrate hearing the committal, who will be in a position to form an assessment of the reliability, accuracy and truthfulness of the complainant, as well as the evidence of the independent civilian witnesses.”

*Re B H; An application for Bail*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Keogh J

[2016] VSC 369

The applicant – aged 17 years at the time of the alleged offending – was charged with 7 counts of theft of a motor vehicle, 8 counts of theft, 2 counts of aggravated burglary, arson, 2 counts of assault police, resist police, 2 counts of reckless conduct placing a person in danger of serious injury, fraudulent use of a number plate, 3 counts of burglary and 2 counts of unlicensed driving. He was in a show cause position due to the charges of aggravated burglary. He had an extensive recent criminal history. At the time of the alleged offending he was on youth parole. It was accepted by each witness that his history of offending was directly related to his use of methylamphetamine. Bail was refused, Keogh J stating at [23]: “I am satisfied that the applicant represents an unacceptable risk of (a) committing further offences if released on bail; and (b) endangering the safety or welfare of members of the public if released on bail. I cannot conceive of any conditions that would act to reduce those risks to an acceptable level.”

*Re Kazim Kuzu; An application for Bail*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Elliott J

[2016] VSC 710

The 31 year old applicant was charged with multiple indictable offences – including criminal damage x 4, assault with a weapon, 13 contraventions of family violence intervention orders, 3 threats to kill & stalking – whilst on bail. He had prior convictions and had previous commissions of indictable offences whilst on bail. He used methylamphetamine regularly. He had secured a place at a residential drug treatment facility but its location was proximate to the complainant. For this reason, despite strong family support, the applicant was an unacceptable risk of committing further offences and accordingly had failed to show cause. Bail was refused.

*Re Casper De Waij*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Jane Dixon J]

[2016] VSC 805

The 23 year old applicant was charged with multiple indictable offences including trafficking in ecstasy (88 tablets) and 15g of ketamine. At the time of the offending he was on bail on a charge of being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and he was on a 12month CCO for charges of assault and driving while his authorization was suspended. He had been released from prison only 4 months before. He had been diagnosed with a borderline personality disorder. He had been offered a place at a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility but – in contrast with the circumstances found by the Court of Appeal in *Robinson’s Case* (2015) 47 VR 226 [50] – drug addiction was not ‘central to his offending behaviour’. The applicant was held not to have shown cause and to be an unacceptable risk of re-offending if released on bail. Bail was refused.

*Re Roberts*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Taylor J]

[2018] VSC 554

The 32 year old applicant was charged with 64 offences, including rape, unlawful assault, contravene family violence intervention order and use a carriage service for child pornography material. The complainant for most of the alleged offences was the applicant’s ex-partner, the mother of their children. In refusing bail Taylor J noted at [57]-[59]:

“I am not satisfied that that risk of family violence, were the applicant released on bail, could be sufficiently mitigated by the imposition of a bail condition that the applicant was to comply with existing FVIO (s.5AAA(2)(b)]. This is so even though the informant agreed in cross examination that he is in regular contact with the complainant and he would expect her to tell him if she had been contacted by the applicant.

There is nothing in the history of the applicant’s behaviour, over quite some years, towards the complainant and in the face of multiple court orders that provides any foundation for optimism that the applicant would desist from family violence if released. It follows that, in all the circumstances, I am not satisfied that the applicant has shown a compelling reason why his continued detention is not justified.”

*Re Mongan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2018] VSC 638

The 39 year old applicant was charged with aggravated burglary, false imprisonment, recklessly causing injury, threat to kill and assault. The victim was his estranged wife, the mother of the couple’s 3 sons aged 12, 10 & 8. The alleged offences – which included allegations of gaffer taping his wife’s mouth and hitting her head against the ground a number of times – occurred little more than a week after he had completed a Men’s Behavioural Change program and only about 6 weeks after he had been placed on a bond after pleading guilty to 2 charges of contravening a family violence intervention order in which the protected person was his wife. The applicant was a qualified accountant and a teacher and was enrolled in a law course. In refusing bail, his Honour found that no compelling reason existed and was also satisfied that unacceptable risk had been established.

*Re Abaker*

[Supreme Court of Victoria – Tinney J]

[2018] VSC 718

The 20 year old applicant with no criminal history was charged with armed robbery involving the use of a loaded handgun, drug trafficking and dishonesty offences. The level of IQ of the applicant – said to be 54 – was an important matter relied upon but other evidence called into question the validity of the test result. The offending was categorised as serious and there was no inordinate delay.

Other cases in which Compelling reason (cause) was not shown and bail was refused include:

* *Edward Charles Wilson* [2006] VSC 178 (Hargrave J/agg burg x 2+serious injury).
* *O’Reilly v DPP* [2007] VSC 76 (Curtain J/affray+kidnapping+aggravated burglary).
* *Michael Ansell* [2007] VSC 82 (Bongiorno J/breach intervention order+cause injury).
* *Waleed Haddara v DPP* [2007] VSC 274 (Bongiorno J/kidnapping+aggravated burglary); [2008] VSC 298 (Whelan J/further bail application).
* *Watts v DPP* [2007] VSC 275 (Bongiorno J/aggravated burglary+attempted armed robbery+armed robbery x 4).
* *Re George Dickson* [2008] VSC 516 (Lasry J/armed robbery x 25).
* *IMO an application for bail by Dalibor Dobrosavljevic* [2009] VSC 170 (Kaye J/kidnapping, armed robbery and aggravated burglary in the context of a campaign by applicant and co-accused against victim).
* *IMO an application for bail by Ahmed Chkhaidem* [2009] VSC 216 (Osborn J/repeated assaults on ex-wife plus breach of intervention order and breach of bail conditions).
* *Re Houssein Hawli* [2009] VSC 606 (Whelan J/intentionally causing serious injury, threat to kill and false imprisonment in family situation where the applicant allegedly used a weapon/priors including 3 convictions for failing to answer bail).
* *Re Kazem Hamad* [2010] VSC 585 (Hollingworth J/kidnapping, false imprisonment, intentionally causing injury, recklessly causing injury/applicant on bail for other offences).
* *Re Marcus Aaron Held* [2012] VSC 648 (Curtain J/ attempted rape, indecent assault, intentionally causing serious injury & contravening a family violence intervention order).
* *Bail Application – Bunning* [2013] VSC 681 (Kaye J/146 counts of Medicare fraud of which 104 were committed whilst on bail on other charges – 46y.o. disgraced former policeman addicted to morphine).
* *Re Jan Visser* [2013] VSC 736 (Dixon J/extremely serious drug offences – allegation that applicant was unable to prepare his defence adequately if in custody not accepted).
* *Re PI* [2014] VSC 64 (Hollingworth J/6 offences including false imprisonment and intentionally causing serious injury in which the victim was the applicant’s former domestic partner).
* *Re Application for bail by Christopher Sharp* [2016] VSC 238 (Coghlan JA/armed robbery & possess amphetamine – accused already on bail for offences of dishonesty and violence).
* *Re Abdullah (Bail Application)* [2016] VSC 745 (Priest JA/aggravated burglary, attempted armed robbery, extortion, unlicensed possession of a handgun, threat to inflict serious injury x 2).
* *Re Garou* [2018] VSC 418 (Champion J/theft, burglary, aggravated burglary, theft of motor vehicle, criminal damage, handling stolen goods, dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime, possessing cartridge ammunition, possessing firearm, possessing cannabis, using amphetamines, making a false report to police, unlicensed driving, failing to stop vehicle on request, obtaining property by deception, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and contravening a conduct condition of bail – proposed conditions do not ameliorate unacceptable risk).
* *Re Mongan (No.2)* [2019] VSC 119 (Tinney J/aggravated burglary, false imprisonment and assault charges) – adult applicant making a second application for bail – no compelling reason shown and in any event unacceptable risk of the matters set out in section 4E(1)(i) to (iii)).
* *DPP v Chesterman (a pseudonym)* [2020] VSC 255 (Tinney J/DPP appeal against magistrate’s grant of bail - respondent charged with incest and other offences against 3 of his 4 daughters – not reasonably open for magistrate to be satisfied of a compelling reason in justification of bail – appeal allowed – order granting bail set aside – fresh application for bail refused).
* *Re Griffin* [2020] VSC 312 (Jane Dixon J – 26 year old man with a “long-entrenched addiction to methamphetamine that has subsisted despite living at home with his family and holding down employment” and “a significant problem with anger and impulse control” charged with 9 offences including aggravated burglary and intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence – Court unable to say that applicant is likely to spend more time on remand than if convicted and sentenced in respect of the core offences – compelling reason not shown – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused); subsequently granted bail by Lasry J with condition to reside in residential rehabilitation program: see [2020] VSC 312 and **section 9.4.2.2** above).
* *Re Krishna Menon* [2020] VSC 565 (Champion J/56 year old applicant charged with sexual penetration of his 9 year old grandniece, criminal damage, making threats to kill and resisting an emergency worker on duty – strong prosecution case – despite prospects of delay and the impact of COVID-19 on custody compelling reason not shown – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re SS* [2020] VSC 618 (Tinney J – 41 year old applicant on supervision order (‘SO’) under *Serious Offenders Act 2018* after completion of sentence for murder charged with 11 counts of contravening the conditions of a supervision order and two counts of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – compelling reason not shown – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Rajasekar* [2020] VSC 774 (Tinney J – 37 year old applicant of Sri Lankan/Tamil origin with alcohol problem charged with arson endangering life after disagreement with co-tenants about money – on CCO at time of fire – notwithstanding delay, vulnerable state of applicant in custody and CISP support compelling reason not made out – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Brown* [2020] VSC 870 (Beach JA – 49 year old applicant charged with aggravated burglary, making threat to kill, stalking, trespass, criminal damage, aggravated assault, use of a carriage service to menace, harass and offend and theft – No compelling reason justifying grant of bail – Applicant an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person and of committing an offence while on bail).
* *Re Kur* [2021] VSC 285 (Tinney J-21 year old applicant charged with robbery arising from a planned robbery with gang connection – on youth parole at the time – onerous conditions in custody – serious criminal history including many prior convictions for robbery – poor history of compliance with bail – compelling reason not established and unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Glover* [2021] VSC 822 (Beach JA-44 year old applicant charged with intentionally damaging property, arson, possessing a prohibited weapon, possessing cannabis and psilocybin and 4 charges of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail – although some matters tell in favour of a grant of bail (delay if it becomes excessive, onerousness of remand in current circumstances, stable accommodation and support from applicant’s partner and extended family), when synthesised with negative matters (including applicant’s unsuitability for CISP bail), compelling reason not established – applicant also an unacceptable risk if released on bail).
* *Re Falcke* [2022] VSC 4 (Whelan JA-the applicant was charged with serious violent offences against his domestic partner – a delay until mid 2022 whilst unfortunate is not so great as to constitute a compelling reason in this case – if found guilty the applicant may possibly receive a lesser sentence but he is likely to receive a sentence with a custodial component in excess of the time he will have spent on remand given that he has a prior conviction for armed robbery and the alleged offending occurred while he was on bail and was subject to a family violence intervention order).
* *Re LN* [2022] VSC 11 (Niall JA-applicant a 29 year old Iraqi national in Australia on a permanent protection visa – charged with 12 charges against his wife spanning the period March 2017 to July 2021 and occurring within the family home – the charges were rape x 8, threat to kill, attempted rape, common law assault x 2 – in all the circumstances, especially given the number and seriousness of the charges and a reasonable strong prosecution case on some counts, compelling reason not established).
* *Re Goggin* [2022] VSC 221 (Tinney J-46 year old applicant with no criminal history – family violence offending in the context of a family breakdown – repeated and flagrant breaches of FVIO – concerning aspects of some of conduct of applicant including a previous threat to set fire to house with himself in it – no psychiatric material provided in application – likely delay of 9½ months – stable accommodation and family support available – significant risk of further breaches of FVIO – compelling reason not made out – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re AC* [2022] VSC 370 (Champion J-26 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with reckless conduct endangering life x 2, dangerous driving whilst pursued by police and contravening a FVIO x 2 – at the time of the offending the applicant had no fixed address and was reportedly abusing drugs and staying with associate drug-users – applicant has a significant and relevant criminal history comprising primarily of driving, weapons, dishonesty and drug-related offences – he also has a history of bail offences and breaching court-imposed orders, including failing to answer bail and committing an indictable offence on bail, breaching a community correction order and persistently contravening a FVIO – availability of residential rehabilitation at Odyssey House – unusual time to make a bail application since applicant had been on remand for 8 months and had indicated his intention to plead guilty to the offences charged – however counsel submitted that allowing the applicant an opportunity to participate in residential rehabilitation before sentencing would provide motivation for the applicant and potentially mitigate sentence – compelling reason not made out – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Ejikeme* [2022] VSC 522 (Hollingworth J-applicant, a Nigerian resident in Australia for 4 years charged with one count of reckless conduct placing a person in danger of death, one charge of intentionally causing injury and two counts of unlawful assault. All of the charges arose out of an incident on 25/03/2022, in which Mr Ejikeme’s wife and two young daughters aged 5y & 2y were the victims and in respect of which an interim family violence intervention order was made on the same day – compelling reason not shown – the circumstances of the applicant’s visa do not entitle him to receive any financial support from the government – he has no accommodation, no assets, no income, no means of financial support, no stable residence, no ties to the jurisdiction other than his immediate family, and nobody who is able to offer him any support or assistance – to release him on bail would be to place him in a position of totally unacceptable risk of breaching the IVO).
* *Re Brook* [2022] VSC 566 (Priest JA-35 year old applicant charged with being a prohibited person in possession of firearm x 2, possessing a trafficable quantity of unregistered firearms; possessing a prohibited weapon, reckless conduct endangering life and other charges – compelling reason not shown – in any event unacceptable risk that applicant would obstruct the course of justice and fail to answer bail).
* *Re Maynard* [2022] VSC 616 (Tinney J-37 year old applicant with extensive criminal history charge with kidnapping, armed robbery, intentionally causing injury and other offences allegedly committed shortly after completion of sentence for similar offending – complainant who also had a criminal history now deceased, never having been cross-examined – whether statements of complainant likely to be admitted into evidence – case not a weak one – likely delay of 24 months before finalisation of contested charges – accommodation, employment and surety available – applicant’s membership of outlaw motor cycle gang increased risk of reoffending – compelling reason not made out – unacceptable risk in any event).
* *Re Forrester* [2022] VSC 654 (Kaye JA-26 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with culpable driving causing the death of his front seat passenger, driving under the influence of a drug and driving at excessive speed – single vehicle collision – very high level of methylamphetamine detected in applicant’s bloodstream – speed before impact estimated at 166-195 kph – previous convictions for drug-related offending – applicant’s history demonstrates a continuing disregard for the law {on 6 occasions he has been convicted for failing to appear on bail and on 6 occasions of committing indictable offences while on bail, he has also twice breached the terms of a CCO and had recently been intercepted on 4 occasions while driving a vehicle while exceeding the prescribed concentration of drug in bloodstream} – in the circumstances his Honour held that the proposal that the applicant attend Odyssey House for therapeutic treatment was not a sufficiently compelling reason to justify the grant of bail nor was it sufficient to offset the otherwise substantial risk that if released on bail the applicant would endanger members of the community and would commit an offence while on bail).
* *Re Keating* [2023] VSC 594 (Champion J-29 year old applicant charged with theft, unlicensed driving, reckless conduct endangering serious injury and life and intentionally causing serious injury – extensive criminal history – limited delay – intervention orders – pregnant partner – mental health issues – no compelling reason – in any event unacceptable risk shown).
* *Re Tata* [2024] VSC 378 (Tinney J-62 year old applicant charged with alleged family violence offending against former partner and daughters – threat to damage property by burning down house – three threats to kill in family violence context – reckless conduct endangering serious injury – steps taken by applicant to carry out threats – no criminal history – contested hearing not likely until at least late 2025 – family violence intervention orders in place – seriousness of alleged offending – prosecution case reasonably strong – time on remand will not exceed ultimate sentence if convicted – supportive family and residence – existence of compelling reason not established – unacceptable risk in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Kuol* [2024] VSC 596 (Tinney J-38 year old applicant with long-established diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder charged with stalking *–* ongoing treatment challenges while in custody – limited insight into illness and need to comply with medication – significant criminal history including bail related offending – availability of accommodation and supports – plea hearing listed in 11 days’ time – compelling reason not established – unacceptable risk made out in any event – bail refused).
* *Re Engin* [2024] VSC 722 (Champion J-57 year old applicant facing charges relating to threat to kill, rape, procuring a sexual act by threat, sexual assault, common law assault, false imprisonment and breaching an intervention order – complainant is applicant’s wife – limited criminal history but numerous allegations of violence and abuse by the applicant towards his wife – compelling reason not demonstrated – unacceptable risk established – bail refused).
* *Re Uppu* [2024] VSC 729 (Champion J-40 year old applicant facing charges relating to kidnapping, extortion with threat to kill, robbery, contravention of an order intending to cause harm or fear of safety, persistent contravention of an order, unlawful assault, and failing to comply with a direction issued under the Crimes Act 1958 — applicant alleged to have kidnapped and coerced former partner’s husband to return overseas — limited criminal history — compelling reason not demonstrated based on test in *Rodgers v The Queen* [2024] VSCA 214 — unacceptable risk demonstrated — bail refused).

### **9.4.3 Where likelihood of sentence is less than the time likely to be spent in custody**

Two of the “surrounding circumstances” in s.3AAA(1) of the **BA** that a bail decision maker is required to take into account are:

(k) the length of time the accused is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused;

(l) the likely sentence to be imposed should the accused be found guilty of the offence with which the accused is charged.

In *Re Johnstone [No 2]* [2018] VSC 803 the 38 year old accused – who had no prior convictions and who did not enjoy perfect mental health – was charged with making a threat to kill a neighbour with whom he had been in dispute for some time, with contravening a personal safety intervention order, with committing an indictable offence whilst on bail and with contravening a conduct condition of bail. He had been in custody for 4 months. Beach JA granted bail, holding at [20] & [24] respectively-

* that it was a compelling reason that it was “very unlikely that the applicant will (if convicted) be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of the length of the time he has already served in custody”; and
* that he was “not satisfied that there is an unacceptable risk of the kind referred to in s.4E which cannot be appropriately mitigated by specific bail conditions tailored to the present circumstances”.

In discussing generally the weight to be given to the likelihood of any sentence being less than the time already spent in custody, Beach JA said at [18]-[19]:

[18] “The fact that an applicant for bail might have already spent more time in custody than they are likely to be sentenced to on conviction is a very relevant circumstance in determining whether bail should be granted. Generally, and all other things being equal, the fact that an applicant for bail has already spent more time in custody than would be required by any sentence that might ultimately be imposed for the relevant offending, is a compelling reason justifying the grant of bail: Cf. *Re Magee* [2009] VSC 384 [20] where Forrest J concluded that the fact that an applicant for bail would likely serve more time on remand than would result from being convicted and sentenced was relevant in determining whether that applicant had shown cause why his continued detention in custody was not justified. See also s.1B(1)(b) of the Act, which requires the Act to be applied having regard to the importance of ‘the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty’. For such a circumstance not to constitute a compelling reason in a particular case, one would expect there to be other significant countervailing factors or circumstances affecting the synthesis required to be performed in order to determine whether a compelling reason within the meaning of s.4C of the Act exists.

[19] That is not to say that the likelihood of any sentence being less than time already spent in custody is determinative in favour of an applicant for bail who is required to satisfy the compelling reason test. The issue is an important one in the synthesis. However, it cannot determine the question. First, that is not what the Act says. Secondly, to allow the issue to be determinative would admit of the possibility of a particular applicant ignoring bail conditions on the assumption that bail would not be revoked because of the existence of an earlier (and perhaps lengthy) period of time in custody.”

In *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 the appellant was an intellectually disabled 15 year old Aboriginal child who was facing a large number of charges including attempted armed robbery, burglary, theft, criminal damage, theft of motor vehicles, obtaining property by deception, unlawful assault, unlicensed driving, careless driving & 67 charges of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. It was common ground that exceptional circumstances were made out. The most significant of the five circumstances which led the Court of Appeal to hold that the appellant was not an unacceptable risk was that it was common ground that, due to his age and circumstances, the appellant was unlikely to be receive a YJC sentence if he was found guilty of the charges which are outstanding against him. At [62]-[66] Maxwell P & Kaye JA, raising the analogy of ‘preventive detention’, said:

[62] “The Act does not direct that bail must be granted in a case in which the length of time that an accused is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused would exceed the likely sentence that would be imposed should the accused be found guilty. Rather, s 3AAA(1)(k) and (l) specify that as a consideration which must be taken into account as part of the ‘surrounding circumstances’.

[63] It is, nevertheless, a consideration of significant importance both in deciding whether ‘exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail’ and in considering whether such risk as an offender would present if released on bail is acceptable. Once it was conceded that it is unlikely that a custodial sentence would be imposed (given the appellant’s age and disability and the nature of the offences charged), his continued incarceration pre-trial would be akin to a form of preventive detention. That is, he would be being held in custody solely because of the risk that he might commit an offence in the future.

[64] In the absence of any specific statutory provision, preventive detention is alien to fundamental principles that underpin our system of justice. This is an issue of particular concern in relation to young offenders who are denied bail. As the Hon Paul Coghlan QC noted in 2017, in *Bail Review: First Advice to the Victorian Government,* 80 per cent of children who have had bail refused do not go on to attract a term of detention for the offending in question. Given the longstanding concern of the criminal justice system — and the community — to keep children out of custody wherever possible, these are alarming statistics.

[65] In addition, as counsel for the appellant contended, in a case such as this it is quite conceivable that an accused person, with the appellant’s disabilities and psychological impairment, might feel impelled to plead guilty to the charges against him, in order to gain his freedom, when he might otherwise have exercised his right to contest the charges. Any such incentive would likewise be contrary to fundamental principle.

[66] While each case must be decided according to its own individual facts and by reference to the defined ‘surrounding circumstances’ specified in s 3AAA(1) of the Act, in the present case, the consideration, that it is unlikely that the appellant will be sentenced to a term of detention, was necessarily a most powerful factor in determining whether, if the appellant were granted bail, the risks of him offending, or endangering others, were unacceptable.”

In *Re John Booth* [2022] VSC 657 the applicant was a 44 year old man with a substantial criminal history and a history of illicit drug use charged with trafficking (*simpliciter*) in and possession of methamphetamine, possession of 1,4 butanediol and dealing with property suspected of being proceeds of crime. In granting bail Croucher J said at [2]:

[2] “The delay before a trial is heard in the County Court is likely to be such that, if Mr Booth is not bailed, his period in custody will exceed any non-parole period component of a prison sentence imposed on him, were he to be found guilty of all charges at that trial. I am satisfied that this amounts to a compelling reason justifying bail.”

See also *Re DR* [2019] VSC 151, [56] (Champion J); *Re Dillon* [2019] VSC 80, [41] (Maxwell P); *Re Logan* [2019] VSC 134, [72] (Elliott J); *Re Fleming* [2019] VSC 615 (Lasry J); *Re DG* [2019] VSC 622, [15] & [63] (Zammit J); *Re Barda* [2019] VSC 716, [24] & [39] (Weinberg JA); *Re Rodgers [No 2]* [2019] VSC 760, [29]-[30] (Beach JA); *Re Dinatale* [2021] VSC 104, [61] (Tinney J); *Re Key* [2021] VSC 109, [29] (Tinney J); *Re Blackmore* [2021] VSC 111, [19] (Coghlan JA); *Re Yousuf* [2021] VSC 272, [52] (Lasry J); *Re Rizakis* [2021] VSC 550, [52] (Lasry J); *Re TH* [2021] VSC 597, [47] (Fox J); *Re* *Kuol* [2021] VSC 598, [37] (Lasry J); *Re AMR* [2021] VSC 743 (Coghlan JA); *Re Rye* [2021] VSC 875 (Coghlan JA); *Re Cowley* [2022] VSC 304, [78] & [81] (Taylor J); *Re Bray* [2023] VSC 371 (Incerti J); *Re PJ* [2024] VSCA 97, [75] (Incerti J).

However, in *Re Dib* [2019] VSC 11 at [10] Lasry J noted that the Court must still determine the matter notwithstanding the respondent’s concession that there was “a real likelihood that, if refused bail, the applicant would spend longer in custody than he would be likely to be sentenced to by a court for these offences.” See also *Re Kelly* [2022] VSC 232 at [60] & [75]-[76]; *Re Pollard* [2023] VSC 106 at [53].

### **9.4.4 Unacceptable risk**

The ‘unacceptable risk’ test is now encapsulated in ss.4A(4), 4C(4), 4D & 4E of the **BA**.

In *DPP v Haidy* {aka *Vasailley*} [2004] VSC 247 Redlich J postulated a test of unacceptable risk which is clear and concise. At [18] his Honour held that **“the question of unacceptability [of risk] must be relative to all the circumstances”.** This is now described in s.4E(3)(a) as “[taking] into account the surrounding circumstances” as defined in s.3AAA(1) of the **BA**. His Honour held:

"Onus where a similar offence committed whilst on bail

[12] The prosecution bears the legal onus to establish an unacceptable risk under s.4(2)(d)(i) of the Act. Where the Applicant has allegedly committed a similar offence within a short time after being granted bail, the prominent hypothesis arises that the Applicant will offend again if released. The Applicant thus has an evidentiary onus of persuading the court that he is not an unacceptable risk.

Degree of risk required

[14] Bail when granted is not risk free. *Williamson v DPP (Qld)* [1999] QCA 356.

[15] As the offender’s liberty is at stake, a tenuous suspicion or fear of the worst possibility if the offender is released will not be sufficient. *Dunstan v DPP* (1999) 107 A Crim R 358; [1999] FCA 921 per Gyles J at [56]; *Williamson v DPP (Qld).*

[16] **It is not necessary that the prosecution establish that the occurrence of the event constituting the risk is more probable than not. There are recognised conceptual difficulties associated with applying the civil standard of proof to future events. *Davies v Taylor* [1974] AC 207 at 212; *Patterson v BTR Engineering (Aust) Ltd* (1989) 18 NSWLR 319 at 325 per Gleeson CJ. To require that the risk be proved to a particular standard would deprive the test of its necessary flexibility. What must be established is that there is a sufficient likelihood of the occurrence of the risk which, having regard to all relevant circumstances, makes it unacceptable. Hence the possibility an offender may commit like offences has been viewed as sufficient to satisfy a court that there is an unacceptable risk. *R v Phung* [2001] VSCA 81; *MacBain v Director of Public Prosecutions* [2002] VSC 321 per Nettle J.**

[17] Such an approach is consistent with the view adopted by the Full Court of the Federal Court in *Dunstan v DPP* (1999) 107 A Crim R 358; [1999] FCA 921 per Gyles J…

**Circumstances other than degree of risk**

[18] To assess whether the risk is unacceptable the court is required to have regard to the matters set out in s.4(3) of the Act and all other relevant matters. Some of those matters may not bear upon the degree of risk. The degree of likelihood of the occurrence of the event may be only one factor which bears upon whether the risk is unacceptable. Thus the time which will elapse before the offender’s trial has been held to be a factor which may bear upon whether the risk is unacceptable. *Mokbel v DPP (No. 2*) [2002] VSC 312 per Kellam J at [41]. *Skura; Application for Bail*; *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)* [2002] VSC 393.. As Kellam J was to say in *Mokbel (No. 3)* at [10]:

'The issue of detention by reason of unacceptable risk is an issue which must be balanced with the likelihood the allegations against an accused man then brought before a court in the near future. The question of unacceptable risk is to be judged according to proper criteria, one of which is the length of delay before trial; that is, although the risk might be objectively the same at different times, the question of unacceptability must be relative to all the circumstances, including the issue of delay.'

[19] His Honour’s view accords with the common law position explained in *R v Martin* [1973] VR 854 and with the broad principle that public interest considerations may lead to bail being granted though the risk is relatively high or refused though the risk be minimal. *R v Wakefield* (1969) 89 WN (Pt 1) (NSW) 325."

In *Robinson v R* [2015] VSCA 161 the judgments of Redlich JA & Priest JA both referred with approval to the above dicta from *DPP v Haidy*. In particular Redlich JA said at [65]:

“It may be acknowledged that any grant of bail must carry some risk. Subsection 4(2)(d)(i) is prefaced on the assumption, however, that there are some risks which are acceptable; and that, in certain situations, what might initially be an unacceptable risk may be rendered an acceptable risk (for example, by the imposition of appropriately restrictive conditions of bail).”

In the Queensland Court of Appeal in *Williamson v DPP (Qld)* [1999] QCA 356 Thomas J at [21] emphasised the important distinction between an **unacceptable risk** and **any risk**:

"No grant of bail is risk-free. The grant of bail however is an important process in civilised societies which reject any general right of the executive to imprison a citizen upon mere allegation or without trial. It is a necessary part of such a system that some risks have to be taken in order to protect citizens in these respects. This does not depend on the so-called presumption of innocence which has little relevance in an exercise which includes forming provisional assessments upon very limited material of the strength of the Crown case and of the defendant's character. Recognising that there is always some risk of misconduct when an accused person, or for that matter any person, is free in society, one moves to consideration of the concept of unacceptable risk."

In granting bail in *Re Application for Bail by Patricia Mitchell* [2013] VSC 59 at [11], T Forrest J discussed the legal principles in relation to unacceptable risk as follows:

“The legal principles that I must apply are clear enough. The question of whether the applicant is an unacceptable risk of re-offending is not a discrete question in an application, nor is it necessarily determinative. It must be considered with all the other factors relevant to bail against the background that the applicant is prima facie entitled to bail. Those other factors inter alia are these:

(a) the likely seriousness of that re-offending;

(b) the likely sentence that could be imposed should the applicant be convicted of the offences upon which bail is sought;

(c) whether and to what extent the applicant is a flight risk;

(d) whether and to what extent the applicant is a risk of interfering with witnesses;

(e) the fact that, if there is re-offending, the criminal process will deal with that; and

(f) any personal factors that may attach to the applicant.”

Although he was “satisfied that there is a real prospect that the applicant will re-offend whatever conditions are imposed”, his Honour granted bail on the basis that the applicant had spent nearly seven weeks on remand and it is “unlikely that she would be sentenced to a longer term of imprisonment for the current offences”.

In *Fred Joseph Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 at [25] Maxwell P spoke of the difficulty of measuring risk:

“As to the risk of criminal behaviour if bail were granted, it is widely recognized that the prediction of future dangerousness is notoriously difficult: see e.g. *Veen v R* (1979) 143 CLR 458 at 463-5 per Stephen J; *Kable v DPP* (1996) 189 CLR 51 at 122-3 per McHugh J; *Attorney-General v David* [1992] 2 VR 46 at 61-2 per Hedigan J; *Fardon v Attorney-General (Qld)* (2004) 78 ALJR 1519 at 1542-3 [123]-[125] per Kirby J. Making predictions is difficult enough when the person has been found guilty of relevant, recent criminal conduct. How much more difficult it is when – as will always be the case with a bail application – the applicant for bail is presumed to be innocent of the matters charged.”

And at [26] Maxwell P approved the following dicta of Fox J in *Burton v R* (1974) 3 ACTR 77 at 78:

“It is not normally a factor of any great weight adverse to the granting of bail that an accused person may possibly commit a crime while he is on bail. It should not readily be assumed that he might commit an offence, or further offence. If he does, he can be dealt with by the criminal law. There are, however, situations in which the consequences of any crime he commits while on bail may be so serious and have such a widespread effect that the possibility that he may commit a crime while on bail is an important consideration.”

In *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 at [25], [27] & [28] Bell J discussed the concept of unacceptable risk when seen through the prism of human rights legislation and sounded various cautions, noting especially the need for appropriate evidence-based determinations focusing on the individual circumstances of the applicant:

[25] “It is established that the bail authority must carefully consider the facts and circumstances of the individual case and determine whether the continued detention of the accused is justified: *Matznetter v Austria* [(1979–80) 1 EHRR 198](http://international.westlaw.com/find/default.wl?mt=TabTemplate1&db=999&rs=WLIN13.10&tc=-1&rp=%2ffind%2fdefault.wl&sp=vicsupreme10&findtype=Y&ordoc=2022798712&serialnum=1979024312&vr=2.0&fn=_top&sv=Split&tf=-1&pbc=77CDF99F&utid=1), [8]-[9]; *Clooth v Belgium* (1992) 14 EHRR 717, [40]; [Y*agcı and Sargin* (1995) 20 EHRR 505](http://international.westlaw.com/find/default.wl?mt=TabTemplate1&db=999&rs=WLIN13.10&tc=-1&rp=%2ffind%2fdefault.wl&sp=vicsupreme10&findtype=Y&ordoc=2022798712&serialnum=1995257888&vr=2.0&fn=_top&sv=Split&tf=-1&pbc=77CDF99F&utid=1), [50]; *Panchenko v Russia* [2005] ECHR 72, [106]. As was held in *Clooth v Belgium* (1992) 14 EHRR 717, [44], reliance by the prosecution on ‘general and abstract’ considerations and a ‘stereotyped formula’, without more, will be insufficient. Particular allegations, such that the accused would disturb public order, must be based on facts reasonably capable of showing that kind of threat: [*Letellier v France* (1992) 14 EHRR 83](http://international.westlaw.com/find/default.wl?mt=TabTemplate1&db=999&rs=WLIN13.10&tc=-1&rp=%2ffind%2fdefault.wl&sp=vicsupreme10&findtype=Y&ordoc=2022798712&serialnum=1992235782&vr=2.0&fn=_top&sv=Split&tf=-1&pbc=77CDF99F&utid=1), [51]. Moreover, generalised concerns that an accused might abscond are not regarded as sufficient justification for refusing bail. For example, in *W v Switzerland* (1994) 17 EHRR 60, [33] the court stated:

‘the danger of absconding cannot be gauged solely on the basis of the severity of the possible sentence; it must be assessed with reference to a number of other relevant factors which may either confirm the existence of a danger of absconding or make it appear so slight that it cannot justify pre-trial detention: see, as the most recent authority, [*Tomasi v France (A/241-A)*: (1993) 15 EHRR 1](http://international.westlaw.com/find/default.wl?mt=TabTemplate1&db=999&rs=WLIN13.10&tc=-1&rp=%2ffind%2fdefault.wl&sp=vicsupreme10&findtype=Y&ordoc=1993251627&serialnum=1992235683&vr=2.0&fn=_top&sv=Split&tf=-1&pbc=528EE143&utid=1), [98]. In this context, regard must be had in particular to the character of the person involved, his morals, his assets, his links with the State in which he is being prosecuted and his international contacts: see *Mutatis Mutandis, Neumeister v Austria (No. 1)* *(A/8)*: (1968) 1 EHRR 91, [10].’

Similarly, reference to a person’s record of prior offending is not sufficient, without more, to justify a conclusion that he or she might re-offend: *Muller v France* [1997] ECHR 11. The apprehension of danger associated with re-offending must be ‘plausible’ and refusal of bail must be ‘appropriate, in the light of the circumstances of the case and in particular the past history and the personality of the person concerned’: *Clooth* (1992) 14 EHRR 717, [40]. Lack of a fixed residence (eg homelessness) or of work or family ties are relevant but not determinative: *Sulaoja v Estonia* (2006) 43 EHRR 36, [64].”

[27] “…[C]ontinued detention is not compatible with human rights under art 5(3) [of the *Convention for the Protection of Human Rights*] unless the bail authority has considered alternative measures for ensuring the appearance of the accused at trial: *Jablonski v Poland* [2000] ECHR 685, [83]-[84]. Thus, in *Sulaoja v Estonia* (2006) 43 EHRR 36, [64] the court held that the detention violated the human rights of the applicant because guarantees of appearance at trial and a prohibition on him leaving his place of residence were not considered.

[28] “The *Human Rights Act 2004* (ACT) is very similar to the Victorian Charter. Human rights have been taken into account in the ACT in relation to bail. For example, in *Re Seears* [2013] ACTSC 187 Refshauge J was required by the *Bail Act 1992* (ACT) to take the likelihood of reoffending into account. After examining the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, his Honour said this of that requirement at [29]:

‘Thus, the fear of future offending must not be assumed merely from the applicant’s antecedents and the view of the risk must be reasonably held. This will require a court not merely to assess the risk of reoffending but also to consider other avenues such as bail conditions which may achieve the end desired, namely public safety, which must be made effective. It is not merely a function of viewing the criminal record of the applicant but looking at all the circumstances and coming to a view of the statutory test, namely ‘the likelihood of committing an offence’, particularly having regard to the well-known difficulty in making exact predictions of recidivism and dangerousness.’”

In *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372 the applicant was a 16 year old girl who had been charged with assisting an offender EV aged 19 years to avoid apprehension, with theft of a Lexus motor vehicle which had earlier been stolen in the course of an aggravated burglary and with possessing and using cannabis and methylamphetamine. In granting bail, Priest JA said at [22]-[26]:

“Ultimately, the respondent has failed to persuade me that the putative risks cannot adequately be addressed by the imposition of strict conditions.

It is a serious thing to consign a child to custody or detention pending the resolution of a criminal charge (or charges), particularly where — as here — it is far from a foregone conclusion that the child will receive a sentence involving detention consequentially upon a finding of guilt. **Indeed, in my view, the custody or detention of a child should be avoided unless unavoidable**.

In the present case, there seems little doubt that, should he be convicted of the charges that he faces, EV will receive a sentence involving his detention. The same cannot, however, confidently be said in FA’s case. Self-evidently, the two charges against her of assisting an offender are far from being the worst examples of that particular offence, far more serious examples of such offending routinely coming before the courts. A similar observation might be made of the theft charge (the drugs charges being minor). Given that FA was aged 15 years at the time of offending, and is now only 16, it would be surprising if she received a sentence involving her further detention, particularly given that she has already been detained for 77 days.

In determining to grant bail, I do not ignore FA’s prior breaches of the criminal law and her failures to comply with court imposed sanctions and orders (in particular, her failure to answer bail and her commission of an indictable offence whilst on bail). Nor do I ignore her extensive and unhappy history of involvement with the DHHS, or the opposition to bail of the families of the victims of EV’s culpable driving. FA’s circumstances are, however, the source of some sympathy. There is little doubt that she has had a traumatic childhood, has become ostracised from her parents and has struggled with her mental health and drug use, those circumstances having influenced her past behaviour.

Importantly, however, the evidence demonstrates FA’s new and positive involvement with Youth Justice, which provokes some optimism that she may be able to turn her life around. More to the point, perhaps, that new and positive involvement with Youth Justice, coupled with the strategies that have been put in place to ameliorate the risks that FA will commit further offences, endanger a person or fail to answer bail, have persuaded me that the putative risks are capable of being rendered acceptable by the imposition of appropriately strict conditions of bail.”

In *Ali El Nasher v DPP* [2020] VSCA 144 – in allowing an appeal against a refusal of bail by Tinney J – the Court of Appeal highlighted the balancing exercise imposed by s.4E in the evaluation of the acceptability or unacceptability of risk and “after anxious consideration…concluded that the respondent has failed to demonstrate that the appellant presents any of the identified forms of unacceptable risk”. The Court “reached this conclusion upon the appellant agreeing to the imposition of a very stringent set of conditions.” At [51]-[52] Priest, T Forrest & Weinberg JJA said [emphasis added]:

[51] “What constitutes an acceptable risk (or conversely, an unacceptable risk) will always be a question of fact and degree. There are 14 variables in s 3AAA (‘surrounding circumstances’) that must be considered, together with subsets within some of those variables; the weight given to those variables and their interaction with each other will vary from case to case. The end result will be a product of an informed, intuitive evaluation, and reasonable minds may well differ on that result.

[52] **Whilst we have considered each relevant surrounding circumstance, we have given significant weight to the nature and seriousness of the alleged offending, the strength of the prosecution case and the length of time the appellant is likely to spend in custody if bail is refused. We consider it likely that the appellant will spend up to three years in custody before his trial is completed.** We consider it nigh on inevitable (on the current evidence) that, should the prosecution see fit to proceed with them despite their obvious weakness, he would be acquitted of attempted murder and the causing serious injury charges. We consider he has, at the least, a real prospect of acquittal on attempting to intentionally cause serious injury simpliciter or in circumstances of gross violence. If these conclusions are correct, the appellant may well have served all or nearly all of any sentence that may be imposed on the ‘attempt’ alternatives or the minor charges (charges 5 to 8) before his guilt or otherwise on any of those charges is determined. This prospect weighs powerfully in the mix on the question of unacceptable risk. If the case were stronger, or the delay less than anticipated in this case, then other factors pulling in the opposite direction would likely assume more significance in the s 4E exercise.”

In *Re IM* [2023] VSC 360 at [111] Champion J said:

“The question arose in my mind as to whether it was relevant to the determination of this application that the applicant may be at risk of retribution by others should he be released on bail. In respect of this issue, I accept the submission of both the applicant and the respondent that the safety of the applicant from others is not a relevant consideration in relation to unacceptable risk, except insofar as it may support an argument that he is a more vulnerable individual than he otherwise might have been.”

### **9.4.4.1 Otherwise unacceptable risk deemed acceptable due to particular circumstances**

It is clear from the cases discussed in this subsection that although a risk may be objectively the same at different times, the question of whether it is unacceptable or acceptable must be measured on the basis of all of the ‘surrounding circumstances’ in existence at the specific time.

On 24/08/2001 *Antonios Mokbel* had been charged with 11 counts of trafficking over a period in excess of 10 months contrary to the *Drugs Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* and one count of importing approximately 2kg of cocaine contrary to s.233B(1)(d) of the *Customs Act 1901* (Cth). The subsequent Court appearances provide a graphic illustration of the non-static nature of the relevant circumstances:

* On 07/09/2001, after a 3 day bail hearing, a magistrate granted him bail on stringent conditions with a surety of $1 million.
* On 01/10/2001 Cummins J allowed DPP appeals and revoked bail: see *DPP v Antonios Mokbel* [2001] VSC 403 {MC10/01}.
* On 26/04/2002 Kellam J dismissed a further application for bail, holding that no relevant new facts or circumstances had been established and, in any event, exceptional circumstances had not been established by the applicant: see *Mokbel v DPP* [2002] VSC 127 at [64]-[65].
* On 09/08/2002 Kellam J dismissed a further application for bail. The State committal earlier foreshadowed to commence on 15/07/2002 had not materialized, the committal being affected by the investigation of former officers of the Victoria Police Drug Squad, and had been tentatively relisted to commence on 25/11/2002. The Commonwealth committal was listed to commence on 16/10/2002. His Honour held: "Whether the [State] committal will take place in time for the trial to commence within 2 years of the date of arrest is now highly speculative." See *Mokbel v DPP (No. 2)* [2002] VSC 312 at [17]. And at [18]:

"It is clear that delay between arrest and final disposition can of itself constitute an exceptional circumstance. A civilised society, as we profess to be, cannot tolerate its citizens being detained for inordinate periods without the allegations made being determined by the process of trial."

After referring to a number of authorities, his Honour held (at [29]) that the applicant had established that exceptional circumstances constituted by delay did exist. However, his Honour also found (at [37]-[38]) that there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant if released on bail would fail to answer the charges or would commit an offence whilst on bail or would interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice whether in relation to himself or some other person, the prior conviction of the applicant for attempting to pervert the course of justice being a matter of significance. Accordingly, his Honour refused bail (see [40]). Nevertheless his Honour added a cautionary rider (at [41]), a rider which succinctly encapsulates the proposition that the unacceptability of risk is not to be measured in isolation from other criteria, one of which is the length of delay before trial:

"Notwithstanding the conclusion reached by me on the facts of this particular case…our society will not, and should not, tolerate what is effectively the indefinite detention awaiting trial of persons such as the applicant whilst an investigation such as that currently under way takes place. The issue of detention by reason of unacceptable risk is an issue which must be balanced with the likelihood of the allegations against an accused man being brought before a court in the near future. **The question of unacceptable risk is to be judged according to the proper criteria, one of which is the length of delay before trial. That is, although the risk might be objectively the same at different times, the question of unacceptability must be relative to all the circumstances, including the issue of delay.** This view appears to be supported by a decision of Crockett J in *R v Pietrobon* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 13/01/1988]."

* However, on 04/09/2002 Kellam J - after reiterating (at [6]) that "whether or not [the] risk is unacceptable requires to be balanced against the period that the applicant will otherwise spend in custody awaiting trial" and after taking into account "the precautionary measures that can be taken by way of conditions" – found that the balance had changed. His Honour was satisfied that if bail was not granted the applicant would have been incarcerated for a period of at least 18-19 months before committal and there was a high probability that he would not come to trial in less than 3 years from his arrest. His Honour accordingly found that the risk was no longer unacceptable and released the applicant on bail with sureties to a total value of $1 million and stringent conditions, including reporting to a police station twice each day. See *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)* [2002] VSC 393. At [13]-[14] his Honour said:

"As Vincent J said in *R v Medici* [unreported, 27/09/1993], this is not an occasion 'for the Court to act as Pontius Pilate by washing its hands of the matter'. As I have said previously, it is not sufficient to say 'we will wait and see'. The community will not tolerate the indefinite detention of its citizens with no prospect of charges being tried within a reasonable period. Accordingly, despite the nature of the offences with which the applicant is charged, and despite the serious reservations that I have expressed about the granting of bail, the situation facing the applicant cannot be allowed to exist indefinitely."

In *Robinson v R* [2015] VSCA 161 Priest JA, concurring “after considerable hesitation” with the judgment of Maxwell P & Redlich JA, cited with approval at [84] dicta of Redlich J (as he then was) in *Haidy v DPP* [2004] VSC 247. In that case Redlich J himself cited with approval at [18] the following dicta of Kellam J in *Mokbel v DPP (No.3)* at [10]:

*“***The question of unacceptable risk is to be judged according to proper criteria, one of which is the length of delay before trial; that is, although the risk might be objectively the same at different times, the question of unacceptability must be relative to all the circumstances, including the issue of delay.”**

In *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 the Court of Appeal (Maxwell P & Kaye JA), in granting bail to an intellectually disabled 15 year old Aboriginal child, identified the above dicta as the point of principle raised by the appeal, saying at [6]-[7]:

[6] “The point of principle raised by the appeal is that first identified by Kellam J in *Mokbel v DPP (No 3)* [2002] VSC 393 at [10], namely that the question of unacceptable risk ‘must be relative to all the circumstances’, in particular the exceptional circumstances that justify the grant of bail. Where the relevant circumstances – in that case, pre-trial delay – are particularly compelling, a risk which might in different circumstances be regarded as unacceptable ‘may properly be viewed as acceptable’ [*DPP (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41]; [2009] VSCA 26 (Maxwell P, Vincent & Kellam JJA)].

[7] As we seek to explain, the key features of the present case – the appellant’s youth and severe cognitive impairment, his vulnerability in custody and the probability that he would not receive a custodial sentence – were so powerful as to entail the conclusion that such risk as he presents is not unacceptable. It should be emphasised that the conditions of bail are directed to ensuring that the appellant is supported and supervised, so as to minimise any such risk.”

In granting bail in *Re Zayneh (No 2)* [2024] VSC 374, a case in which there was a likely 5 year delay, possible 6 year delay before trial, Elliott J said at [90]-[91]:

[90] “…As stated previously, the length of the delay in the proceeding is relevant to the question of whether, if released on bail, Zayneh would pose an unacceptable risk of failing to answer bail: *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311, [6]. See also *Bail Act*, s.3AAA(1)(k). In cases of inordinate delay, the risk posed by an applicant must be assessed bearing in mind that the community ‘will not tolerate the indefinite detention of its citizens with no prospect of charges being tried within a reasonable period’: *Mokbel v Director of Public Prosecutions (No 3)* (2002) 133 A Crim R 141, 143 [13] (Kellam J), cited with approval in *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41]. More recently, see *Re Tiburcy* [2024] VSC 163, [71]-[76] (Fox J), being another case arising out of Operation Ironside (though acknowledged to involve ‘not the most serious example of large commercial quantity drug trafficking’: at [74]).

[91] Accordingly, Victorian courts have acknowledged that there will be circumstances where actual or anticipated delay in a proceeding is of such a magnitude that risks which would otherwise be regarded as unacceptable may properly be viewed as acceptable: *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41]. As observed by the Court of Appeal in *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 [7]:

[T]here will come a point where the continued pre-trial detention of a person who is presumed innocent can no longer be justified, notwithstanding the seriousness of their alleged offending and the magnitude of the risk that they will not answer bail. We do not venture to say when that point will occur, either generally or in this particular case, because that will depend upon all the facts and circumstances. (Citations omitted.)

In *Re AMR* [2021] VSC 743 Coghlan JA said at [22]: “I make it clear that, had it not been for the fact that I have concluded that there is a very strong likelihood of any sentence being exceeded by the period on remand, I would have regarded the applicant as an unacceptable risk and I would have refused him bail.” See also *Re Pollard* [2023] VSC 106 at [61].

### **9.4.4.2 SOME CASES IN WHICH ACCUSED WITH PRIMA FACIE RIGHT TO BAIL WAS HELD NOT TO BE AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK AND BAIL WAS GRANTED**

*William Archibald Smith*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Coldrey J, unreported, 25/03/1997]]

The prosecution contended that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses. The informant deposed that this "belief was grounded principally on the fact that the applicant was a member of a motor cycle club known as 'Coffin Cheaters' and the informant's belief that motor cycle gangs have a reputation for interfering with witnesses". No evidence was called that the applicant had interfered with witnesses in this or any other case. His Honour took the view that the informant's belief was no more than an assertion. The applicant had no priors for violence, had a home and mortgage, a stable relationship and a steady job. His Honour was satisfied that the applicant did not constitute an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses.

*Tomac Letowski*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Coldrey J, unreported, 13/03/1997]

This case illustrates, like *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)*, the way in which whether or not a risk is unacceptable depends on all of the circumstances, including the conditions in which the accused is detained in custody. In this case the the 17 year old applicant had initially been deemed to be an unacceptable risk of committing further offences and of failing to appear on bail: he had 2 priors for failing to appear. He was to have been kept in the juvenile section of the Remand Centre but was in fact held in Pentridge with adult offenders. Bail was no longer opposed. His Honour held: "Whilst the risk was said to remain, in all the circumstances of the case it could not be categorized as unacceptable."

*Mark Douglas*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Kaye J]

[2005] VSC 344

The applicant was 19 years & 11 months old. He was charged with and had pleaded guilty to 6 counts of driving while suspended on various dates between November 2004 & March 2005, his licence having been suspended in November 2004 & December 2004. Describing the applicant’s record as “quite extraordinary”, His Honour said at [24]-[25] that “standing alone and if not offset by any other factors, that record would truly create an unacceptable risk of re-offending if the applicant were released on bail….This is a matter which has given me great cause for concern. It is very tempting at this stage simply to rely on the record of the applicant as indicating that he is an unacceptable risk and as investing me with really no confidence that he will obey the law if he is now released. On the other hand, I am impressed by the fact that the applicant is, by and large, not a person of criminal background, that he has been exposed to circumstances which must surely have revealed to him a very sharp lesson as to what happens to those who think the law is not there to be obeyed….He is a young man with a bright and promising future”. Balancing these factors His Honour held, with “hesitation”, that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk of re-offending while on bail or of failing to answer his bail.

*Paul Richard Worland*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Kaye J]

[2005] VSC 179

The 17 year old applicant had been charged with armed robbery, assault, unlawful imprisonment and kidnap, amongst others. The incidents occurred when he was with other youths and had been drinking. Bail had been granted with conditions, *inter alia*, that he not drink alcohol, not associate with co-accused, not contact witnesses and comply with Juvenile Justice directions. The applicant breached the conditions and was charges with ‘street type offences’ including drinking alcohol under-age and on railway premises. Bail was revoked for failure to comply with bail conditions. Since being incarcerated, the applicant had been held in the Melbourne Custody Centre and the Moonee Ponds cells. His Honour was ultimately reassured that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk of committing further offences whilst on bail due to the support of his aunt and of a Juvenile Justice officer. His Honour also expressed concern about the unsuitability of the custodial arrangements and the likely delay in the matter coming to trial.

*Gregg James Hildebrandt*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bongiorno J]

[2004] VSC 549

[Supreme Court of Victoria, King J]

23/09/2005

[Supreme Court of Victoria, King J]

[2006] VSC 199

The applicant, who was charged with conspiracy to murder, had a *prima facie* right to bail. He was refused bail by Bongiorno J on 18/11/2004. He was being held on remand at Barwon Prison in circumstances which involved him being locked down in his cell for 22½ hours a day and with extremely restrictive access to legal advisers and family visits which were “few and highly constrained”, circumstances which Bongiorno J described as “quite unacceptable”. His Honour continued: “This society does not pay lip service to the presumption of innocence; it is a real presumption and we do not lock up innocent people for 22½ hours a day.” Nevertheless his Honour refused bail, holding that the applicant presented an unacceptable risk of offending again and perhaps of absconding. His Honour also remarked that if something were not done about the circumstances in which the applicant was held on remand, the case for granting him bail “may become overwhelming”. A further bail application was refused by King J on 23/09/2005. However, on 31/05/2006 King J granted bail, finding that the further delay before trial and the conditions on which he was being held on remand – by that stage locked in his cell for 18 hours a day – now outweighed those factors which made him an unacceptable risk. At [11] her Honour said:

“The factors that make him an unacceptable risk have to be weighed against the fact that he is a man presumed to be innocent, who has currently spent two years on remand and will spend a minimum of at least two years eight months on remand prior to his case being heard. Not only that, the period of time that he has spent on remand has been in onerous conditions as referred to during the last bail application…Whilst I accept that the conditions may well be necessary for the safe management of prisoners within that unit, it does not make the conditions less onerous.”

*Deng Mawn*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Bell J]

[2014] VSC 1 at [120]-[133]

The applicant who was aged 21y 7m had been in custody for 20 days. This was his first experience of being in custody. He and his family were refugees from South Sudan and had arrived in Australia in 2005. He has been diagnosed with PTSD and struggled with alcohol abuse. He had limited formal education and spoke barely functional English. He was charged with one count of robbery, two counts of intentionally causing injury, two counts of recklessly causing injury, three counts of assault, one count of assault with intent to rob and one count of theft. These arose from two separate incidents on 04/12/2014 which occurred when the applicant was severely affected by alcohol. The prosecution intended to uplift the charges into the committal stream but was unable to provide a firm indication of when a committal hearing might be. The applicant was subject to a community correction order. His YSAS youth worker gave impressive evidence in support of the application for bail. The applicant had a prima facie entitlement to bail and one of his co-accused had already been granted bail. Bail was opposed on the ground of unacceptable risk of reoffending. In granting bail, Bell J said at [130]-[132]:

“I think that risk can be mitigated to an acceptable degree by conditions. The applicant’s offending is related to his refugee background, social circumstances and alcohol dependence. As a young refugee with very limited education and English language skills, he is highly vulnerable. On the evidence, he is confronting the challenges of his past and immigration to Australia. I agree with Mr Barwick that he has the capacity to play a positive leadership role in his community. The applicant may have refugee-related PTSD, which may be behind his alcohol dependence. His is strongly engaged with YSAS and the youth worker spoke highly of him. His mother and brother were in court to support him. He has a good home to go to and is committed to his rehabilitation. The YSAS support amounts to an intensive bail support program and the applicant consents to participation.

Due to the severity and nature of the offending and the risk of him reoffending, there must be conditions…including conditions relating to alcohol abuse…I think the applicant is capable of observing a no-alcohol-consumption condition and is genuinely committed to doing so. Such a condition should be imposed to mitigate the risk of re-offending. As a further control, he should submit to a preliminary breath test when required by the police. Protection of the community is a strong consideration here. Hopefully these conditions will also assist in his rehabilitation. I was informed that he could and would conveniently report daily to the police as the local station is near YSAS which he already attends daily. That condition can be liberalised if it interferes too much with the applicant’s daily life and, given progress, becomes unnecessary.

The police sought a condition excluding the applicant from the Sunshine shopping precinct for the protection of the community. I think this would impose greater constraints upon his freedom of movement that the circumstances require. It would prevent him from going to an important place of contact between people generally, and young people particularly, in the local area. Having regard to the conditions of bail, I think he is not likely to engage in street crime in the precinct. I will impose a condition excluding him from the Brimbank Library, which is a relatively confined area and the scene of one episode of his alleged violent offending.”

*Re Farah*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Tinney J]

[2018] VSC 649

The accused was not in a show compelling reason situation as common law kidnapping is not a Schedule 2 offence. In granting bail, his Honour said at [41]: “I consider that the stringent conditions I have imposed are sufficient to control and reduce the risks in question to the level of being acceptable ones.”

*Re Keene*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Fox J]

[2021] VSC 864

The 40 year old Aboriginal applicant with a lengthy criminal history was charged with attempting to pervert the course of justice in circumstances where he had told a false story in relation to a proposed bail address. The alleged offence would be a Schedule 2 offence only if one of clauses 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 1(d) or 1(e) of the Schedule were applicable. The applicant was the subject of an outstanding warrant issued in West Australia. Her Honour held that this did not bring him within 1(a) [‘on bail for another indictable offence’] or 1(b) [‘subject to a summons to answer a charge for another indictable offence’]. Nor we he ‘at large awaiting trial for another indictable offence’ or ‘under a parole order’. Nor was he ‘serving a sentence for another indictable offence’ under 1(d), he being on remand at the time. Hence the applicant had a prima facie entitlement to bail. In granting bail, her Honour said at [94]: “I have reached the conclusion that in all the circumstances, particularly the lengthy and uncertain delay before trial, that the risk presented by the applicant is not an unacceptable risk if he is released on bail with conditions.”

Re DM

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Croucher J]

[2024] VSC 559

The 45 year old applicant faced a single charge of failing to comply with a curfew condition on a bridging visa. He had been born in Sudan, fled to Egypt during civil war, and spent ten years in a refugee camp. He was granted a humanitarian visa in 2005, entered Australia in 2006 and subsequently accrued a significant criminal history in Australia. His visa was cancelled in 2018 for failing to pass a character test and was placed in immigration detention in 2019, Following a decision of the High Court, applicant he was released from immigration detention in November 2023 and granted a bridging visa with curfew and electronic monitoring conditions. He allegedly breached the curfew condition on 12 May 2024. No other offending was alleged on that occasion. The applicant was on four sets of bail for nine charges of breaching curfew condition or electronic monitoring condition of bridging visa over previous month and charges of possessing weapon and resisting police. The offence carries a mandatory prison term for at least one year, but may be suspended on recognisance release order — The applicant was *prima facie* entitled to bail and his Honour held that, if bailed, he was not an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person. Categorising the offence of 12 May 2024 as “minor”, Croucher J granted bail on the applicant’s own undertaking with 4 conditions. At [84] his Honour said:

“…[D]espite the risk the Director asserts DM presents, it would be unacceptable to keep him in custody beyond the period that the law would be likely to require by way of an immediate prison sentence upon conviction of the charged offence — which period is nil. This is because to do so would amount to a form of preventative detention, a concept which, sensibly and humanely, is (for the most part) quite foreign to our criminal justice system.”

Other cases in which the accused was held not to be an unacceptable risk and bail was granted are *Jerome Gelb* [2007] VSC 39 (Bongiorno J); *Re Menna* [2018] VSC 538 (Champion J); *Re Shadi Farah* [2018] VSC 649 (Tinney J); *Re Busari* [2020] VSC 572 (Tinney J); Re *AH* [2021] VSC 426 (Jane Dixon J); *Re Newman* [2021] VSC 656 (Niall JA); *Re LM* [2021] VSC 735; *Re SC* [2021] VSC 770 (Lasry J); *Re Cassidy* [2022] VSC 491 (Croucher J); *Re Winks* [2023] VSC 734 (Kaye JA); *Re Sahin* [2024] VSC 748 (Elliott J).

### **9.4.4.3 SOME CASES IN WHICH ACCUSED WITH PRIMA FACIE RIGHT TO BAIL WAS HELD TO BE AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK AND BAIL WAS REFUSED**

*John Victor Morgan*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J, {MC32/94}, 16/06/1994]

This was a DPP appeal against magistrate's decision to grant bail to an accused charged with conspiracy to murder and incitement to murder his wife in order to have access with his children. The accused and his wife had been through acrimonious Family Court proceedings in which his wife was granted custody of the children and the accused's access was reserved. Restraining orders were also made. There was a strong Crown case involving 2 taped meetings between accused and undercover police officer posing as a 'hit man'. The DPP contended that bail should be revoked due to:

* the seriousness of the offences;
* the strength of the case;
* the accused would commit further offences whilst on bail;
* the premeditation involved;
* the fact that the accused had had a deep commitment to his wife being murdered and there was nothing to indicate that he was no longer in that frame of mind.

Held, revoking the accused's bail- The magistrate was in error in considering that the accused was not an unacceptable risk of committing further offences whilst on bail.

*Dorothy Marie Skura*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Teague J]

[2003] VSC 207

The applicant, a 38 year old Canadian national in Australia on a temporary visa, was charged with incitement to murder her husband. She indicated she would be pleading guilty and her plea was listed to be heard in 2 months from the date of the bail application. Teague J noted that the applicant had a *prima facie* entitlement to bail under the **BA** but that position was affected by the common law position that there would be no presumption of entitlement to bail following a plea of guilty. The applicant's husband was substantially reconciled with her and was willing to have her return to the family home. Teague J held that notwithstanding a number of significant matters which went in the applicant's favour, bail should be refused. At [9] his Honour said:

"Given the combination of the proximity of the hearing date of the plea, and the substantial prospect of a significant term of imprisonment, I have concluded that there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant would not surrender herself, and accordingly the application is refused."

[The applicant was subsequently sentenced by Bongiorno J to 7 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 4½ years: [2003] VSC 290. The Court of Appeal allowed an appeal against that sentence and re-sentenced the applicant to 6 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 3 years: [2004] VSCA 53].

*Mario Rocco Condello*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Teague J]

[2004] VSC 409

The applicant was charged with conspiracy to murder and incitement to murder Carl Williams, George Williams and another person and possession of a handgun. His co-accused were a solicitor, George Defteros, and a registered police informer described as "166". The applicant was *prima facie* entitled to bail. The factors in the applicant's favour included his age, state of health, no convictions for 20 years and no priors for violence or false passports, delay of up to 18 months, unsatisfactory conditions of remand, no history of failing to appear, no evidence of recent drug trafficking or criminal activity, significant ties to the jurisdiction, preparedness to accept stringent conditions and the strength of the prosecution case considering it relied heavily on the evidence of "166". However His Honour refused bail, concluding that the applicant was an unacceptable risk of failing to appear and committing further offences whilst on bail. The following factors, taken cumulatively, led his Honour to find the applicant an unacceptable risk:

* the serious nature of the charges;
* the priors, though not recent, were serious and some had occurred overseas;
* in the taped conversations the applicant had expressed interest in obtaining false passports and had expressed animosity to the Williams' family members, the price on whose heads was $150,000;
* intermittent use of the name "Michael Oliver" to whom false details had been ascribed;
* acquisition of overseas assets such as a villa in Nice on which up to $100,000 had been spent on renovations;
* acquisition of large monetary assets in Australia coupled with "opaque" details of how those assets were acquired and unsupported by the small amount of taxable income declared;
* the applicant's occupation was variously described by counsel as "funeral director", "investor","conveyancer" and "lender".

*Fergus O’Hea*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Kaye J]

[2005] VSC 127

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Mandie J]

[2005] VSC 314

The applicant was charged with two counts of intimidating a witness, two counts of harassing a witness and one count of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. He was on parole at the time of the alleged offences and had a history of failing to meet previous bail orders. Despite the applicant having a *prima facie* entitlement to bail, both Kaye J & Mandie J refused his separate applications for bail, holding that there was an unacceptable risk that he would interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice. Mandie J concluded that he was not confident that any conditions of bail would adequately protect the witnesses in question.

*Matthew Johnson*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-King J]

[2006] VSC 157

The applicant, who was a serving police officer at the time of the alleged commission of offences involving, *inter alia*, aggravated burglary, trafficking cannabis, blackmail, bribery and extortion and who was a suspended police officer at the time of the alleged making of threats to kill, was held to be an unacceptable risk of interfering with witnesses or otherwise obstructing the course of justice and an unacceptable risk of committing further offences if released on bail, more particularly offences in respect of the witnesses.

*Paul Ronald Tilyard v R*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Coghlan J]

[2009] VSC 117

The applicant was charged with using a carriage service to access and transmit child pornography material, using a carriage service to groom persons under 16 years of age and possession of child pornography. He had come to the notice of the authorities by publishing on a photo sharing website an album of photographs containing 164 images of 2 young boys. These images had been taken at the applicant’s home and depicted a young friend of the applicant’s son with whom he had become besotted. Subsequently other child pornography comprising about 40,000 images and 150 videos were recovered by police from the applicant’s home. It also became clear that the applicant had been corresponding with another young boy, also a friend of his son, by email. Some of this was specifically sexual in use of language and amounted to an invitation to engage in sexual activity. A psychologist considered the applicant to be at moderate risk of re-offending and having very limited insight into his conduct. The applicant was held to be an unacceptable risk and bail was refused.

*KWLD v DPP*

[Supreme Court of Victoria-Croucher J]

[2016] VSC 709 – 28/11/2016

The 22 year applicant – who was a resident of Western Australia – was charged with grooming for sexual conduct with a child under 16 and with failing to comply with reporting conditions as a registered sex offender. He had been in custody since October 2015 and his trial in the County Court had been adjourned to commence in February 2017. New charges of grooming had also been laid recently. The applicant alleged that his dental health was not being adequately addressed while in custody. He had prior convictions for child sexual offences. The applicant was held to be an unacceptable risk of offending on bail and of failing to appear and bail was refused.

Other cases in which the applicant had a prima facie right to bail but was held to be an unacceptable risk include:

* *Re Kelmendi* [2008] VSC 31 (Lasry J/unacceptable risk of failing to appear and re-offending).
* *Ferman v R* [2008] VSC 612 (Coghlan J/prohibited person in possession of unregistered firearm/unacceptable risk of endangering the public and re-offending).
* *DPP v Richardson* [2009] VSC 87 (Cummins J/despite extensive delay applicant an unacceptable risk of re-offending and of failing to appear).
* *Re Guirguis* [2018] VSC 430 (Champion J/charges of threatening to kill his children, rape, rape by compelling sexual penetration and sexual assault/despite delay, unacceptable risk of reoffending].
* *Re LK* [2019] VSC 349 (Macaulay J/charge of extortion/bail previously revoked for failure to comply with conduct conditions/continued association with members of outlaw motorcycle gang/trial imminent/unacceptable risk/bail refused).
* *Re Leigh-Jones* [2019] VSC 845 (Weinberg J/44 year old applicant with extensive criminal history and suffering from paranoid schizophrenia charged with reckless conduct endangering persons and possessing an explosive device/previous contraventions of bail conditions/no bail conditions able to ensure adherence to medication plan/bail refused (s.4E).
* *Re Ikebudu* [2023] VSC 265 (Champion J/unrepresented applicant a Nigerian citizen with no prior criminal history charged with conspiracy to defraud and dealing with the proceeds of crime/circumstantial prosecution case alleging applicant’s participation in a crime syndicate involving false identities, impersonation and diversion of funds to bank accounts/applicant already on remand for 20 months/no bail conditions able to mitigate risk of committing further offences whilst on bail and risk of flight/bail refused).
* *Re Eyles* [2024] VSC 477 (Champion J/26 year old Aboriginal applicant charged with 24 offences including thefts of motor vehicle and possession of firearm/extensive and relevant criminal history/strength of prosecution case/availability of CISP/“the circumstances of the applicant’s alleged offending over such a short period after having been released from custody contributes to a conclusion that, even when taking into account all argued factors including his undisputed Aboriginal background, he is an unacceptable risk of committing further offences, should he be released on bail”/bail refused).
* *Re Carthy* [2025] VSC 23 (Tinney J– 37 year old applicant charged with arson of a shop allegedly in the context of the ongoing ‘tobacco wars’ – related dishonesty and other offending – prima facie entitlement to bail – substantial and relevant criminal history – applicant on bail for other alleged offences and subject to a community correction order at time of alleged offending – family support, stable residence, employment and bail guarantee available to applicant – risk posed by applicant cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level by the imposition of conditions – unacceptable risk established by respondent – bail refused).

### **9.4.5 Whether bail conditions an element of exceptional circumstances/compelling reason**

There is a conflict in the authorities as to whether or not bail conditions can be taken into account as an element of showing exceptional circumstances or compelling reason.

In *Re Michael Sullivan* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC17/82}, 11/02/1983] Young CJ held that they could not, drawing a sharp distinction between the imposition of conditions and the determination of whether cause had been shown:

"The conditions of bail are matters to be considered once it has been decided that bail should be granted and the onus imposed upon the applicant…is not, in my view, discharged by a contention that if bail were granted conditions of the most stringent character might be imposed."

However, in *DPP v Harika* [2001] VSC 237 {MC11/01} at [46] Gillard J held that the inquiries as to show cause and unacceptable risk can overlap. In *Re Fred Joseph Asmar* [2005] VSC 487 Maxwell P went further, holding that they were both part of the one inquiry. It is inherent in his judgment that the question of appropriate conditions is part of the same inquiry. In *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)* [2002] VSC 393 at [6] Kellam J noted that "whether or not [the] risk is unacceptable requires to be balanced against the period that the applicant will otherwise spend in custody awaiting trial. In this regard, there is also to be brought into account the precautionary measures that can be taken by way of conditions." And in *DPP v Stewart* [2004] VSC 405 at [11] Morris J said: "What is an unacceptable risk must be considered in the context of the conditions to which bail will be subject if bail is granted." A combination of these four dicta leads to the conclusion, contrary to that of Young CJ in *Re Michael Sullivan*, that the conditions of bail can be taken into account in determining whether an accused has shown cause. In *Re Joshua Barban & Karl Anthony Barban* [2007] VSC 335, Hollingworth J said at [40]: “Both applicants appear to present some risk to the community in terms of re-offending…I am prepared to grant bail, albeit subject to very strict bail conditions. Those conditions will, I hope, have the effect of reducing to an acceptable level the risk that the applicants present.”

See also *R v Weaver* [2006] VSC 102 (Nettle JA); *Shane Peter Walker* [2007] VSC 129 (Cavanough J); *Griffiths v DPP* [2007] VSC 268 (Bongiorno J); *Kylie Vickers* [2009] VSC 202 (Cavanough J); *Spiteri v DPP* [2014] VSC 566 (Bongiorno J); *Robinson v R* [2015] VSCA 161 (Redlich & Priest JJA).

The structure of the **BA** following the amendments dating from 01/07/2018, in particular the “2-step” formulation in ss.4AA, 4A, 4C & 4D discussed in **sections 9.2.4, 9.2.5 & 9.2.6** above and most of the judgments that have post-dated those amendments, suggest that bail conditions are relevant to step 2 – the issue of unacceptable risk [see e.g. s.4E(3)(b)] – but not to step 1 – the issue of whether the applicant has demonstrated the existence of exceptional circumstances or has shown a compelling reason. However, in *Re KE* [2021] VSC 175 Kaye JA expressly stated at [53] that the question of unacceptable risk was relevant in that case to the determination of exceptional circumstances:

“In a case such as the present, a number of the facts and circumstances, that are relevant to an assessment of whether exceptional circumstances have been established, are also relevant to determining whether a risk of re-offending, or endangering the safety of others while on bail, is unacceptable. In particular, one matter, that has often been regarded as important, in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established, is the presence or absence of factors which may point to the applicant presenting as an unacceptable risk in any of the ways specified by s 4E(1) of the *Bail Act*: *Re Gloury-Hyde* [2018] VSC 393, [30] (Priest JA).”

### **9.4.6 Refusal of bail where person seriously injured**

Section 8B of the **BA** provides that if an application for bail is made by or on behalf of a person accused of an offence of causing injury to another person, a bail decision maker may refuse bail if at the time of deciding the application it is uncertain whether the person injured will die or recover from the injury.

### **9.4.7 Bail pending pre-sentence or other report**

In *Re Durose* [1991] 1 VR 176 {MC15/90} J.H.Phillips J held that where an accused had pleaded guilty to a charge of indecent assault on a 4 year old girl, no error was shown in a magistrate refusing bail pending completion of a pre-sentence report, having regard to the unclear reasons for the commission of the offence and the possibility of public disquiet in the relevant neighbourhood.

In *AW* *v R* [2013] VSC 56 the 16 year old applicant had been arrested in respect of four bench warrants issued in relation to her repeated failures to attend court on offences including assault in company, burglary, theft, obtaining property by deception and five charges of failing to answer bail. She had pleaded guilty and was remanded in custody by a Magistrate pending the completion of a pre-sentence report pursuant to s.571 of the *CYFA*. In granting bail on strict conditions, Curtain J said: “No doubt, [the] very experienced Magistrate was concerned, and not without justification, that AW, if she remained at large, would not attend for interview and assessment with Youth Justice and thereby further frustrate the process.” There were significant differences between AW’s case before the Magistrate and her case before Curtain J, including evidence from AW’s step-father that he would ensure that AW attended court on the return date and a re-scheduling of the Youth Justice assessment to the day after bail was granted.

### **9.4.8 Bail pending appeal against conviction or sentence**

**APPEAL AGAINST DECISION OF MAGISTRATES’ OR CHILDREN’S COURT**

In relation to appeals against conviction or sentence of the Magistrates' or Children's Court, s.265 of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009* provides:

## **265 Bail pending appeal**

1. If an appellant is in custody because of the sentence appealed against and wishes to be released pending the appeal, the appellant—
2. may apply to the Magistrates' Court to be released on bail; and
3. if he or she makes an application under paragraph (a), must give reasonable notice of the application to the respondent to the appeal.
4. If an application is made under subsection (1), the Magistrates' Court must either grant or refuse bail as if the appellant were accused of an offence and were being held in custody in relation to that offence and, for this purpose, the Bail Act 1977 (with any necessary modifications) applies.

In *Re ML* [2022] VSC 10 the applicant had been found guilty by a magistrate at Mildura of persistent contravention of a family violence intervention order and contravening a family violence intervention order intending to cause harm or fear and had applied for bail pending a de novo appeal to the County Court. The magistrate had erroneously applied the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test. In holding that the ‘compelling reason’ test applied, Lasry J said at [19]-[22]:

[19] “The Act is silent on the particular arrangements that apply when an application is made for bail pending appeal. As can be seen, the Court of Appeal have prescribed a test which requires an applicant to establish exceptional circumstances. However, *Cvetanovksi v The Queen* [2020] VSCA 126 and *Re Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580; [2006] VSCA 298 dealt with matters where the charges had been heard before a jury either in the County Court or in this Court and verdicts obtained. Understandably the Court of Appeal did not deal with the rules that apply to applications for bail pending an appeal from the Magistrates Court to the County Court of Victoria, which is dealt with by way of a hearing *de novo*. The difference is important and in my view this case is distinguishable from cases like *Cvetanovski v The Queen* and *Re Zoudi* primarily because of the nature of the appellate hearing in the County Court and because the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009* (Vic) contains [s.265].

[20] It is true that s 265 of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009* (Vic) does not refer to applications for bail in this Court pending County Court appeals from the Magistrates Court but for all intents and purposes I am in the same position as a Magistrate faced with an application for bail pending appeal. It was not in issue that this Court has jurisdiction to hear this application as a consequence of s 18AH of the Act.

[21] In *Re Application for Bail by Tyson Searancke* [2017] VSC 489, [7] and [9], his Honour Weinberg JA, as he then was, held that the requirement in *Re Zoudi* that “bail pending appeal to the Court of Appeal would only be granted where “exceptional circumstances” were shown” does not apply when determining whether to grant an applicant bail pending appeal from the Magistrates’ Court to the County Court, “where the appeal is by way of hearing de novo”.

[22] That being the case, in my opinion cases involving an application for bail pending a *de novo* appeal from the Magistrates’ Court to the County Court are distinguishable from the pronouncements of the Court of Appeal referred to. The test that applies in this application is the same test that would have applied to the bail applications previously made in the Magistrates Court – the applicant must show a compelling reason that would justify a grant of bail.”

See also *Re Diu* [2024] VSC 321.

**APPEAL AGAINST DECISION OF COUNTY OR SUPREME COURT**

The test is much more stringent in the case of an application for bail pending the hearing of an appeal against conviction or sentence of the County Court or Supreme Court. Presumably this is because of the legal principle – not always easy to substantiate in practice – that the conviction is "presumptively correct and not merely provisional" [*Chamberlain v R [No.1]* (1983) 153 CLR 514 at 519] whereas most appeals against conviction or sentence of the Magistrates' (or Children's) Court are by way of hearing *de novo* in the County Court.

In *R v Quoc Kinh Phung* [2001] VSCA 81 the applicant had been convicted of trafficking heroin on a retrial and was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 3 years. A total of 1,246 days of pre-sentence detention was reckoned as already served. He again appealed against sentence and applied for bail pending the hearing of the appeal.

At [8] Batt & Chernov JJA said:

"It is well established that in order to obtain bail pending the hearing of an appeal, an applicant must show very exceptional circumstances. Where the sentencing disposition has been by way of imprisonment with a non-parole period, it is the service of an unexceptional portion of the head sentence, not the non-parole period, which relevantly is the factor calling for consideration, though it is only one of the factors: *Re Jackson* [1997] 2 V.R. 1 at 2-3 and *Re Pennant* [1997] 2 V.R. 85 at 86."

The applicant had a lengthy and significant prior history (40 priors from 15 court appearances, including trafficking, 3 x intentionally causing serious injury and 4 x fail to appear). In refusing bail, Batt & Chernov JJA said at [11]:

"The offence of which he has been convicted, presumptively correctly and not merely provisionally [*Chamberlain v R [No.1]* (1983) 153 CLR 514 at 519] is a very serious one. Further, his prior convictions for trafficking and offences of violence raise the possibility - we put it no higher - of the commission of like offences if he were released on bail. In other words, there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant if released on bail would commit an offence or endanger the safety or welfare of members of the public. More importantly, the four prior convictions for failing to appear in accordance with an undertaking of bail, coupled with the possibility of cancellation of his permanent visa, satisfy us that there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant if released on bail would fail to surrender himself into custody in answer to his bail. In this regard we note that the Crown opposed the application. Finally, on an application such as this, in contradistinction, for instance, to a trial, we think that we can take note of the fact that the Parole Board apparently considered the applicant, at least at the time of its decision, not suitable for release under supervision."

In *Kathleen MacBain v DPP* [2002] VSC 321 the applicant had been sentenced in the County Court to 3 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 2 years on counts of attempted theft and causing injury recklessly. These arose from an incident in which the applicant had attempted unsuccessfully to steal the bag of an 80 year old woman in the process using such force that the victim fell and fractured her left hip. However an appeal against conviction had been allowed and the applicant was awaiting retrial. Accordingly, since the conviction had already been quashed, Nettle J did not apply the "presumptively correct" formulation of *Chamberlain's Case*, saying at [15]: "I cannot…overlook the fact that she has now been incarcerated for 18 months in respect of charges on which she has not been convicted and therefore must be presumed to be innocent". Though the applicant had a lengthy prior criminal history (90 convictions from 15 court appearances) Nettle J granted bail, holding at [17]:

"I reach the view that if conditions [of the kind suggested by counsel for the applicant and counsel for the Crown] are imposed the risk that the applicant would not appear and the risk that she would re-offend whilst on bail may be reduced to a level which should be regarded as acceptable in all the circumstances."

This appears to be a case, like *Mokbel v DPP (No. 3)* [2002] VSC 393 & *Re Tomac Letowski* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Coldrey J, unreported, 13/03/1997], in which although the risk might be objectively the same at different times, the question of unacceptability must be relative to all of the circumstances. Thus, an objectively unacceptable risk had become an acceptable one in the face of the injustice of keeping the applicant in custody for any longer.

In *Re Pinkstone's Application* [2003] HCA 46 the applicant sought bail pending the hearing in the High Court of an application for special leave to appeal against conviction on charges of supplying and attempting to supply speed and cocaine. Kirby J considered a number of matters, including the applicant's need to work to fund counsel of his choice to conduct his High Court appeal. At [24] his Honour held, refusing bail:

"[W]hen I weigh the still relevant considerations mentioned in the earlier bail applications, especially the past conduct involving the false passport and the earlier evasion of authority and take into account the seriousness of which the applicant was convicted, the technical nature of the point raised by him which does not amount to an assertion of innocence and the applicant's otherwise lack of links with Western Australia to which he would have to return if special leave were refused, or being granted, if an appeal were rejected, my view is that bail should not be granted at this time."

In *In the Matter of an Application for Bail by Jack Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580; [2006] VSCA 298 a court of five found that the likelihood that a non-parole period will have expired before an appeal was heard constituted an exceptional circumstance and granted bail: At [2]-[4] the Court said:

[2] “Bail pending appeal will only be granted where exceptional circumstances are shown. The phrase ‘very exceptional circumstances’ is also commonly used, but the approach is the same whichever form of words is used. *Re Clarkson* [2986] VR 583 at 584 per Murray, Brooking and Vincent JJ. It has long been accepted in this Court that, in determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, it is relevant to consider the likely expiry, before the appeal is heard, of the whole or a substantial portion of-

(a) the non-suspended portion of a partly-suspended sentence: *Re Pennant* [1997] 2 VR 85; *Re Schaefer* [2006] VSCA 268; or

(b) the period after which the applicant is to be released on recognisance: *Re Crawley* [unreported, Court of Appeal, 05/08/1998] per Callaway JA.

[3] The question which occasioned the convening of a bench of five was whether the likely expiry of a non-parole period was likewise a relevant consideration…[T]he view which has prevailed since 1997 is that the expiry of the non-parole period is not relevant for this purpose. The ground of distinction which has been relied on is that the release of the applicant after the expiry of the non-parole period depends upon a favourable exercise of discretion by the Parole Board. This means that, unlike the position with a partly suspended sentence and release on recognisance, the date of release is uncertain: *Re Pennant* [1997] 2 VR 85.

[4] In our view, this distinction should no longer be maintained. For the purposes of determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, the expiry of the non-parole period should – unless it appears that the applicant will not be released at or about that time – be treated as a relevant consideration of the same kind as the expiry of the non-suspended portion of a partly-suspended sentence.”

In *Re John William Ash* [2010] VSCA 117 the applicant sought bail pending appeal against conviction and sentence. He had been sentenced to a partially suspended term of imprisonment and the non-suspended portion was likely to have been served before the appeal was heard. Maxwell P & Neave JA – applying *Re Pennant* [1997] 2 VR 85 and *Re Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580 – found there were exceptional circumstances and granted bail.

In *Victor Martin (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2019] VSCA 15 the applicant for bail pending appeal had recently been diagnosed with a life-threatening disease with very limited life expectancy. The hearing of the appeal had been brought forward to accommodate the applicant’s prognosis. Bail was refused, exceptional circumstances not being established.

In *Cvetanovski v DPP* [2020] VSCA 126 the appeal was unlikely to be dealt with util after the expiry of the non-parole period. There was no suggestion that the applicant was unlikely to be released at the the expiration of the non-parole period or that the applicant poses an unacceptable risk. Maxwell P, Beach & Weinberg JJA held that exceptional circumstances were established and – applying *Re Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580 – granted bail pending appeal.

The dicta from *Zoudi’s Case* and *Cvetanovski’s Case* discussed above was approved and applied by the Court of Appeal in *Agresta v The Queen* [2020] VSCA 334 where in granting bail to the appellant Maxwell P & Emerton JA asked “the *Zoudi* question, ‘Is there a risk that success on the conviction appeal might be rendered nugatory?’”.

In *Mokbel v The King* [2025] VSCA 62 the applicant was making an application for bail pending a second conviction appeal. He had several years of non-parole period left to serve on a sentence of IMP26y/20y imposed on substantial drug importation charges. In a reference determination in *Mokbel v The King* [2024] VSC 725 Fullerton J had made comprehensive findings of fresh facts, including findings of illegal and improper conduct by the applicant’s former legal advisor Nicola Gobbo. At [10] & [11] the Court of Appeal (Emerton P, Osborn JA & Jane Dixon AJA) noted that:

[10] “The Court’s power to grant a prisoner bail pending a second or subsequent appeal is founded in s 326F(2) and (3) of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009*...

[11] Section 326F does not specify threshold criteria for the exercise of the discretion granted to the Court. Nonetheless, the decision in *Re Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580, 588 [27]‑[28]; [2006] VSCA 298 establishes that the applicant must satisfy the Court that there are circumstances which are truly exceptional.”

In granting bail their Honours held that:

* the applicant’s prospects of success in combination with other matters amounted to truly exceptional circumstances; and
* the availability of a substantial bail guarantee and the imposition of strict conditions including electronic monitoring meant that unacceptable risk was not established.

In *Zirilli v The Queen* [2020] VSCA 261 the appeal against conviction was based on the discovery that the applicant’s former counsel (on previous bail application and special mention) was, at the time, acting as a police informer in relation to the drug offences of which applicant was ultimately convicted. Counsel for the applicant had conceded that reasonable prospects of success, alone, were insufficient to constitute exceptional circumstances, rather that strong prospects of success would be needed. In holding that exceptional circumstances had not been made out and distinguishing *Cvetanovski v The Queen* [2020] VSCA 126, the Court of Appeal (McLeish & Weinberg JJA) held that the applicant’s prospects on two of the three charges were no more than reasonable and that even success in relation to the most promising charge would leave intact a substantial non-parole period to be served.

The circumstances underlying Zirilli’s unsuccessful application were similar to those in *Madafferi v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 332 where, in finding that exceptional circumstances were not made out and in refusing appeal bail, Emerton & Osborn JJA said at [33]-[35]:

[33] “The principles governing the grant of bail pending an appeal were set out by the Court in *Cvetanovski* as follows [2020] VSCA 126, [1]–[2] (Maxwell P, Beach and Weinberg JJA) (citations omitted):

An application for bail by a person who is appealing against his/her conviction or sentence is quite different from a bail application by a person who is yet to be tried. In the latter case, the presumption of innocence applies and there is, under the Bail Act 1977, a presumption in favour of a grant of bail.

Bail pending appeal, on the other hand, will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The stringency of this requirement reflects the fact that the conviction and sentence are valid unless and until set aside, and are not in any sense provisional or contingent upon confirmation by an appellate court. A grant of bail pending appeal also carries with it the risk that, should the appeal fail, the convicted person will have to return to prison.

[34] ‘Exceptional circumstances’ means circumstances which are ‘truly exceptional’: *Re Zoudi* (2006) 14 VR 580, 589 [28(5)]; [2006] VSCA 298 (Maxwell P, Buchanan, Nettle, Neave and Redlich JJA). The requirement for the applicant to establish exceptional circumstances is a stringent one, having regard to the fact that he has been convicted and sentenced, and the right of appeal is conditioned by the presumption which operates in favour of the validity of the conviction and sentence. This is to be contrasted to trial bail, where an accused enjoys both the presumption of innocence and a presumption in favour of the grant of bail.

[35] Although the applicant relies on a combination of matters to establish exceptional circumstances, including matters relevant to risk (such as the protective factors to which he alludes), the two factors most commonly recognised by the Court as capable of establishing exceptional circumstances are the expiry of the applicant’s non-parole period and the strength of the applicant’s case on appeal.

Noting at [37] that the applicant had been refused parole “largely for reasons related to the nature of the offending for which he was convicted”, their Honours stated at [51]: “[W]e do not consider that, on the material before us, the strength of the applicant’s case on appeal is such as to establish exceptional circumstances.”

In *Fiona Lee Austin v The King* [2022] VSCA 240 a number of documents filed in conjunction with the self-represented applicant’s application for appeal bail had been rejected by the prothonotary. Invoking s.310 of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009* (CPA), the respondent submitted that the Court’s powers to grant bail are only enlivened once an application for leave to appeal is filed. Since no proper application for leave to appeal has been filed, it followed that bail cannot be granted under s.310. Rejecting that highly technical argument, Priest JA held at [20]-[23]:

[20] “It may readily be concluded that s 310 of the CPA is a provision ancillary to those provisions of the CPA which confer rights of appeal (or to seek leave to appeal) to the Court of Appeal under Pt 6.3 of that Act: *Richards (a pseudonym) v The Queen* (2017) 270 A Crim R 311, 314 [12] (Maxwell P and McLeish JA). In my view, however, s 310 is not an exclusive source of power pursuant to which this Court might grant the applicant bail. As a superior court of record, the Supreme Court is able to draw upon a ‘well of undefined powers’, including every power necessary to effectuate the exercise of its jurisdiction: *Grassby v The Queen* (1989) 168 CLR 1, 16–17 (Dawson J). See also *Richards*, 315–6 [14]–[17].

[21] I need not trace the source of this Court’s inherent jurisdiction with its well of undefined powers. That was done recently in *Baker v The Queen (No 2)* [2022] VSCA 171, [17]–[24] (Emerton P, Priest and Niall JJA) {see also Richards, 315–6 [14]–[17]} and it is unnecessary for me to repeat the exercise. Drawing on *Baker*, I consider that s 310 is not the sole source of this Court’s power to grant bail to a person who seeks to challenge his or her conviction or sentence. In my view, quite apart from s 310, the Court has power to do so, that power arising from the Court’s general responsibility for the administration of justice, flowing from its status as a superior court of unlimited jurisdiction. Thus, by way of example, I consider that the Court would not be deprived of power to grant bail if it were plain that there had been a substantial miscarriage of justice, but that an application for leave to appeal was not properly on foot because of defects in the initiating documents (occasioned by a failure to comply with the relevant rules or practice directions). In a case like that it would, I think, be possible to grant bail on an appropriate undertaking by the applicant subsequently to file documents in proper form. As the Court observed in *Baker*, in discharging the general responsibility for the administration of justice, this Court exercises ‘the full plenitude of judicial power’, identified by reference to those powers ‘exercised by any of the superior Courts in England or the judges thereof or by the Lord High Chancellor of England’: *Baker*, [21].

[22] Although the source of power to grant bail in the present case would not flow from s 310 of the CPA, in circumstances where the applicant seeks release pending disposal of her putative applications for leave to appeal, I consider that, for all practical purposes, I should treat the present application as if it were a conventional application for bail pending appeal.

[23] The principles governing an application for bail pending appeal were spelled out in *Zoudi*. Bail pending appeal will only be granted where the applicant for bail establishes exceptional circumstances. For the purposes of determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, the expiry of the non-parole period should — unless it appears that the applicant would not be released at or about that time — be treated as a relevant consideration: *Zoudi*, 581, [2]–[4], 587 [22].”

In ultimately refusing Ms Austin’s application for bail, Priest JA said at [37]: “I have been unable to conclude that any exceptional circumstances exist that could justify a grant of bail. Significantly, there is no prospect of the applicant being denied a period of conditional release on parole by the refusal of bail, and, as best I can judge, the proposed applications for leave to appeal do not appear to have much in the way of merit.”

Other cases in which appeal bail was refused include the following:

* *In the Matter of an Application for Bail by Robert Jack Schaefer* [2006] VSCA 268 (Maxwell P & Buchanan JA).
* *Re Slobodan Pandevski* [2007] VSCA 84 at [17]-[22] (Maxwell ACJ & Eames JA).
* *Re DBA* [2008] VSCA 138 (Maxwell P & Nettle JA).
* *Re Tara Egglestone* [2014] VSC 666 (Beach JA).
* *John William Samuel Higgs v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 90 (Beach & Emerton JJA).
* *John William Samuel Higgs v The King (No 2)* [2023] VSCA 279 (Emerton P & Beach JA).

Other cases in which appeal bail was granted include the following:

* *In the Matter of an Application for Bail by Darryn Garlick* [2006] VSCA 275 (Maxwell P & Nettle JA).
* *Re Momsilovic* [2008] VSCA 183 (Maxwell P & Weinberg JA).

### **9.4.9 Relevance of the standard of medical care in custodial facility**

In *IMO an Application for Bail by Little Joe Rigoli* [2005] VSCA 325 the applicant sought bail pending appeal on the grounds that he suffered from a medical and a psychological condition and that the standard of medical care in custody warranted a grant of bail. The appeal was listed to be heard in 4 weeks’ time. In refusing bail, Maxwell P – with whom Charles JA agreed – said at [5]-[6]:

“This Court must be mindful of the international human rights guarantees in relation to treatment of prisoners. I will not elaborate them now. Suffice it to say that there is an obligation to ensure adequate and appropriate medical care for any person in the custody of the State. See, for example, Article 10 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;* United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *General Comment No 14 on the Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health* at [34]; *The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (Adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955, and approved by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 663 C (XXIV) of 31 July 1957 and 2076 (LXII) of 13 May 1977) at [22]-[26]; *The Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners* (Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 45/111 of 14 December 1990) at [9]. If, as is suggested in some of the material, the facilities made available for the medical and psychological care of prisoners are said to be deficient in some respect, that is not a matter which this Court can ordinarily investigate on a bail application. A court of law is peculiarly unsuited to evaluating the adequacy of the treatment of a particular person having a particular condition, whether medical or psychological. Whether the care in a particular case is adequate or not is a matter for expert opinion. Accordingly, in my view, it would be a rare case indeed in which this Court would come to the view that the standard of medical care provided to a person in custody fell so far below what was required as to warrant a grant of bail pending appeal where bail would not otherwise be granted [T] his Court would only intervene on a medical issue where there was such obvious neglect of the human rights of the prisoner - that is to say, of his entitlement to adequate and appropriate medical care - that intervention by means of a bail order was justified.”

### **9.4.10 Relevance of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006***

In *IMO an Application for Bail by Kelly Michael Gray* [2008] VSC 4 at [9]-[12], Bongiorno J applied the Charter in determining that the applicant had shown cause:

“In the absence of accurate information, the Court is thrown back on an educated guess as to when a case will be heard. Whether an accused person should or should not be granted bail should never depend upon a guess by the judicial officer determining the question, no matter how experienced that judicial officer might be.

This situation is the more unsatisfactory in light of the requirement of those sections of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* which require persons accused of crime to be tried without unreasonable delay and released if that does not occur: ss.21(5)(b) & (c) of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* 2006. Although neither counsel mentioned the Charter in his or her submissions and no argument based on its provisions was put, either by the applicant or by the Crown, the provisions referred to would appear to be highly relevant to the question of bail – not only because of the specific reference in s 21(5)(c) to the consequence of unreasonable delay, namely, release of the prisoner, but also because of the guarantee of trial without unreasonable delay conferred by s 25(2)(c). Counsel for the Crown dismissed the Charter as being irrelevant to the question of bail. She referred to the prohibition against arbitrary arrest and detention [s.21(2) of the Charter] but did not advert to the provisions referred to above nor to their possible interaction with s 21(3) – the provision which prohibits deprivation of liberty other than according to law.

Resorting to the best estimate this Court can make…it could not be said, at least at this stage, that this matter will be finalised before the end of 2008…That a person may serve more time on remand than his ultimate sentence is a significant matter on any consideration of bail at common law. It is of even greater significance now in light of the existence of the Charter and the provisions to which I have referred. If the Charter in fact guarantees a timely trial, the inability of the Crown to provide that trial as required by the Charter must have an effect on the question of bail. It would be difficult to argue that a trial which may well be not held until after the applicant had spent more time in Custody than he is likely to serve upon a sentence would be a trial held within a reasonable time. The only remedy the Court can provide an accused for a failure by the Crown to meet its Charter obligations in this regard (or to ensure that it does not breach those obligations so as to prejudice the applicant), is to release him on bail - at least the only remedy short of a permanent stay of proceedings: see *Martin v Tauranga* *District Court* (1995) 2 NZLR 419 at 425 per Cooke P; *R v Morin* [1992] 1 SCR 771; (1992) 71 CCC (3d) 1.”

In refusing bail in *Re George Dickson* [2008] VSC 516 Lasry J distinguished the case of *Kelly Michael Gray* at [18]-[20] and said at [22]:

“There are, in my opinion, a number of matters that point to a refusal of bail and where that is the case, whilst it is appropriate to take the terms of the Charter into account and give full effect to the right referred to, that must be done against the scheme of the *Bail Act* and its relevant provisions. For the reasons I have already referred to, whilst the delay in the trial until June 2009 is most regrettable, in the particular circumstances of this case, the delay is significantly less prejudicial to the applicant than might normally be expected. I do not consider the provisions of the Charter materially affect the role of delay in this particular application.”

See also *R v Rich (Ruling No.19)* [2008] VSC 538 at [28] per Lasry J.

In *DPP (Cth) v Pasquale Barbaro* [2009] VSCA 26 counsel for the accused argued that attention must be paid to s.21(5)(c) & 25(2)(c) of the Charter, relating to the right of an accused to be brought to trial without unreasonable delay. Counsel also relied on the above dicta of Bongiorno J in *IMO an Application for Bail by Kelly Michael Gray* [2008] VSC 4 at [9]-[12]. Counsel for the DPP (Cth) conceded that the Charter was applicable to an application for bail in respect of Commonwealth offences. This was the first time that such a concession had been made. The submission for the accused was that the Court of Appeal should view the provisions of the Charter as ‘informing’ the application of the provisions of the **BA**. Counsel did not contend that the provisions of the Charter would require any modification of the approach set out by Kellam J in *Mokbel v DPP (No.3)* [2002] VSC 393. Counsel for the Victorian Attorney-General, who intervened in the proceeding pursuant to s.34 of the Charter, submitted that the Charter did not require any departure from the existing approach to the treatment of delay as an issue in bail applications. At [41] the Court of Appeal agreed:

“In our view, the Attorney-General’s submission is correct. Indeed, as we have noted, the submission for Mr Barbaro was in substance no different. Of course, as Kellam J pointed out in *Mokbel v DPP (No 3)*, there will be circumstances where the actual or anticipated delay is of such a magnitude that risks which would, in other circumstances, be regarded as unacceptable may properly be viewed as acceptable. As Kellam J said, the community will not tolerate the indefinite detention of persons awaiting trial. Whether, and when, the delays in a particular case can be so characterised will depend on the circumstances. Suffice it to say that, as things stand at present, this is not such a case.”

See also *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 at [44]; *FT (a pseudonym) v The King* [2024] VSCA 90 at [62]; *Re Zayneh (No 2)* [2024] VSC 374 at [60]-[64] & [79].

A case cited as *Woods v DPP* [2014] VSC 1 involved four unrelated applications for bail which raised common issues. In a very detailed judgment, part of which discussed the relationship between bail and human rights, Bell J said at [3]:

“Everyone charged with a criminal offence is presumed to be innocent and the prosecution must prove the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt. Consistently with that presumption and prosecutorial onus of proof, bail ensures the liberty and other human rights of persons arrested on criminal charges. In Victoria, those rights are to be found in the common law and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*. The provisions of the *Bail Act* governing the entitlement of accused persons to bail and the conditions on which it may be granted have been designed to take those rights into account. Liberty and human rights under the common law and the Charter are the proper context within which those provisions are to be understood and applied. Because these rights are not absolute, they do not prevent the refusal of bail to an accused who, for example, represents an unacceptable risk of failing to appear at trial or pre-trial hearings, committing offences on bail, endangering the safety or welfare of the community or interfering with witnesses.”

In *IMO an Application for Bail by HL* [2016] VSC 750 at [56]-[79] Elliott J discussed the relationship between the *Bail Act* and the *Charter*. At [59]-[60] his Honour cited with approval the aforementioned dicta of Bell J in *Woods v DPP* and added: “As the Charter itself recognises, the human rights it enshrines are subject to such reasonable limits as can be demonstratively justified in a free and democratic society.” And at [58] his Honour stated:

“[T]he rights identified in the Charter do not usurp the provisions of the *Bail Act*. As was observed in *Re Dickson* [2008] VSC 516, [22] (Lasry J), the terms of the Charter must be taken into account and the court must give full effect to the relevant right or rights, but that must be done within the scheme of the *Bail Act*.”

At [66] his Honour concluded: “In short, no ambiguity or competing interpretation was identified in any provision of the *Bail Act* which might have been said to have been affected in its proper construction by any human right the subject of the Charter. At [71] his Honour rejected the Attorney-General’s contrary submission and held that s.25(3) of the Charter – which provides that a child charged with a criminal offence has the right to a procedure that takes account of his or her age and the desirability of promoting the child’s rehabilitation – was applicable to bail proceedings.

The applicant who was 16 years old had been charged with offences including armed robbery, theft of a motor vehicle and assault with a weapon while on bail. The evidence then before Elliott J disclosed that the applicant had been placed in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day in a facility that was formerly Barwon adult prison. He had been denied educational programs, appropriate recreational programs or other amenities consistent with an environment appropriate for the rehabilitation of a child even though there was no evidence that he had been involved in the riots which had caused substantial damage at Parkville on 13-14/11/2016. In those circumstances his Honour proceeded on the assumption that since the applicant’s detention at Barwon Children’s Remand Centre his rights under ss.17(2), 22(1) & 22(3) of the Charter had been infringed. Nevertheless at [96] his Honour held that any bail conditions, including a strict curfew, are not likely to provide the appropriate protection to the community and accordingly at that stage the applicant had not shown cause. However, given that he found some of the evidence about the applicant’s incarceration at Barwon to be “deeply concerning”, his Honour did not refuse bail absolutely but adjourned the bail application for about 1 week remanding the applicant in custody in the meantime. His Honour also directed the informant to file and serve an affidavit deposing to the conditions at Barwon as at 16/12/2016 and the particular circumstances pertaining to the applicant in the week ending 16/12/1016.

In *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* (Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023) Coroner McGregor found that the failure by the prosecutor to make any express reference to s.3A of the **BA** and factors relevant to Veronica’s Aboriginality was a failure “to properly consider Veronica’s Charter rights”. Further, his Honour found at [386]-[390] that certain of the reverse onus provisions of the **BA** were incompatible with the Charter:

[386] “Though indictable, the offence of theft encompasses anything from low value, opportunistic shoplifting borne of necessity to multimillion dollar organized crime for profit. As such, an adult (or child) charged with shoplifting a chocolate bar and, while on bail, stealing a t-shirt would be subject to a presumption against bail and be required to show “exceptional circumstances” to be bailed assuming the person was not also found to be an unacceptable risk of the type listed in s4E of the Bail Act. That such objectively minor offending, and the breadth of such minor offending, may never pose a risk to the safety of the community or attract a sentence of imprisonment requires the accused to establish compelling reasons or exceptional circumstances to avoid remand in custody, is plainly disproportionate to the public safety purpose sought to be achieved.

[387] The Commission submitted that I should conclude that sections 4A and 4AA(2)(c), 4C and clauses 1 and 30 of Schedule 2 to the Bail Act are incompatible with the right in s.21(6) of the Charter, in that the prohibition upon bail and the imposition of a reverse onus-

i. requiring that the accused satisfy the bail decision maker that a ‘compelling reason’ exists to justify bail, upon all persons who are alleged to have committed an indictable offence in the circumstances set out in cl 1 of Schedule 2 or an offence against the Bail Act in cl 30 of Schedule 2; and

ii. requiring that the accused satisfy the bail decision maker that ‘exceptional circumstances’ exist to justify bail upon all persons who are alleged to have committed any Schedule 2 offence in the circumstances set out in s 4AA(2)(c) 496 139 regardless of how minor that alleged offending may be and irrespective of the nature of the offending and whether it poses a risk to the safety of the community-

is an unreasonable limit upon the right not to be automatically detained.

[388] The VEOHRC observed that it is no answer to this analysis of the reverse onus regime to say that an accused is entitled to be brought before a court and will have an opportunity to discharge the burden. Veronica’s experience showed starkly the reality of the reverse onus regime: that an accused ensnared by the provisions will be automatically remanded in custody if their case is not able to be put immediately before a magistrate, or additional time is needed to gather material to discharge the burden of either reverse onus test. As observed by the Court of Appeal in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, 64-65, the prospect of remanding in custody a person who is unlikely to be sentenced to imprisonment is tantamount to preventative detention, which absent specific statutory provision is ‘alien to the fundamental principles that underpin our systems of justice.’

[389] The VEOHRC’s analysis is persuasive, and I accept its submission that the reverse onus regime is too broad and imposes an unreasonable limit upon the right not to be automatically detained in custody in s 21(6) of the Charter.

[390] I therefore find that ss 4AA(2)(c), 4A, 4C and Clauses 1 and 30 of Schedule 2 of the Bail Act are incompatible with the Charter.”

### **9.4.11 Relevance of Aboriginality**

“**Aboriginal person**” is defined in s.3 **BA** to mean a person who–

(a) is descended from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and

(b) identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and

(c) is accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island community.

Prior to 25/03/2024 s.3A of the **BA** required a bail decision maker, in making a determination under the Act in relation to an Aboriginal person, to take into account (in addition to any other requirements of the **BA**) any issues that arise due to the person’s Aboriginality, any issues that arise due to a person’s Aboriginality, including–

1. the person’s cultural background, including the person’s ties to extended family or place; and
2. any other relevant cultural issue or obligation.

In his very comprehensive *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* (Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023) Coroner McGregor addressed at [331]-[335] the failure of the prosecutor to make any express reference to s.3A of the **BA** and factors relevant to the Aboriginality of Veronica, the unrepresented applicant for bail:

[331] The absence of any reference to section 3A of the Bail Act is significant. The provision is a special measure under the Charter designed to reflect and, importantly, help redress the historical and continuing disadvantage faced by Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system: Explanatory Memorandum to the *Bail Amendment Bill 2010*. It obliges a bail decision maker to consider issues that might arise due to an accused’s Aboriginality. Indeed, ‘every aspect of the application [for bail] must be heard through that lens.’

[332] Section 3A, when applied, should have the effect of centring Aboriginality in the procedural and substantive exercise of determining an application for bail. In Veronica’s case, this meant at least, that proper weight could – and should – have been given to her kinship ties, the significance of her mother and brother’s ill health, her cultural connection to Country and community, and the unique disadvantages she experienced as an Aboriginal woman in the criminal justice system.

[333] As noted above, the police prosecutor had information that Veronica was Aboriginal in the remand brief. He would know by virtue of his role and training that s.3A of the Bail Act is a mandatory consideration for the bail decision maker where it is relevant, and he did not alert the bail decision maker. The Administration of Justice Conclave considered that the Charter was an important source of duties and obligations for police in the context of bail where the right to liberty – and I would add, in this instance, equality and cultural rights – are engaged.

[334] … AC Barrett did not dispute that if a prosecutor put known, relevant material before a bail decision maker in a bail application the Aboriginal community may have more confidence in Victoria Police.

[335] In so far as the prosecutor did not alert the bail decision maker to the relevance of Veronica’s Aboriginality during the bail hearing on 31 December 2019, I find that he failed to properly consider Veronica’s Charter rights.

At least partly in response to findings of Coroner McGregor in *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* s.3A **BA** – headed **“Determination in relation to an Aboriginal person”** – has been substantially strengthened and from 25/03/2024 it provides as follows:

1. In making a determination under this Act in relation to an Aboriginal person, a bail decision maker must take into account (in addition to any other requirements of this Act) any issues that arise due to the person’s Aboriginality, including the following—
2. the historical and ongoing discriminatory systemic factors that have resulted in Aboriginal people being over-represented in the criminal justice system, including in the remand population;
3. the risk of harm and trauma that being in custody poses to Aboriginal people;
4. the importance of maintaining and supporting the development of the person's connection to culture, kinship, family, Elders, country and community;
5. any issues that arise in relation to the person's history, culture or circumstances, including the following—
6. the impact of any experience of trauma and intergenerational trauma, including abuse, neglect, loss and family violence;
7. any experience of out of home care, including foster care and residential care;
8. any experience of social or economic disadvantage, including homelessness and unstable housing;
9. any ill health the person experiences, including mental illness;
10. any disability the person has, including physical disability, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment;
11. any caring responsibilities the person has, including as the sole or primary parent of an Aboriginal child;
12. any other relevant cultural issue or obligation.

**Note**: If the Aboriginal person is also a child, the bail decision maker must also take into account the issues set out in section 3B(1).

1. The bail decision maker is to take account of an issue set out in subsection (1) by reference to the evidence and information that is reasonably available to the bail decision maker at the time, including information provided by—
2. the Aboriginal person’s family and community; and
3. providers of Aboriginal bail support services.
4. Despite subsection (2), the bail decision maker is to take account of the issues set out in subsection (1)(a) to (c) whether or not any evidence or information is before the bail decision maker in respect of those issues.
5. The requirement to take an issue set out in subsection (1) into account applies regardless of—
6. whether the person’s connection to their Aboriginality and culture has been intermittent throughout their life; and
7. whether the person has only recently connected to or discovered their culture or heritage; and
8. when the person first discloses that they are an Aboriginal person.
9. If a bail decision maker refuses bail to an Aboriginal person, the bail decision maker must—
10. identify the matters the bail decision maker had regard to in taking into account the issues set out in subsection (1); and
11. either—
12. state those matters orally when refusing bail and ensure that an audio visual recording, or an audio recording, is made of that statement; or
13. record those matters in writing in a form that the bail decision maker considers appropriate.

**Notes**:

1. Section 19(2) of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities provides that Aboriginal persons hold distinct cultural rights and must not be denied the various rights referred to in that provision.
2. When considering bail for an Aboriginal person charged with a Commonwealth offence, a bail decision maker must comply with section 15AB(1)(b) of the Crimes Act 1914 (Cth).

Paragraph (h) of the definition of “surrounding circumstances” in s.3AAA of the **BA** provides that a bail decision maker must take into account all the circumstances that are relevant to “any special vulnerability of the accused, including–

1. being an Aboriginal person; or
2. being a child; or
3. experiencing any ill health, including mental illness; or
4. having a disability, including physical disability, intellectual disability and cognitive impairment.”

Section 10AA of the **BA** [police remand] does not apply to an arrested person who is an Aboriginal person.

Sections 13(3) & 13(4) of the **BA** – providing that only a court may grant bail to a person accused of any Schedule 1 offence other than treason or murder – does not apply to an Aboriginal person, a child or a vulnerable adult in certain circumstances.

Section 13A of the **BA** – providing that only a court may grant bail to a person accused of a Schedule 2 offence and who is already on 2 or more undertakings of bail in relation to other indictable offences – does not apply to an Aboriginal person.

When considering bail for an Aboriginal person charged with a Commonwealth offence, a court must have regard to s.15AB(1)(b) of the *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth).

In *Re Chafer-Smith: An Application for Bail* [2014] VSC 51, the applicant – who identified as an Aboriginal person and had turned 1f8 the day before her alleged offending – was charged with offences involving life-endangering driving. She had allegedly participated in a police chase in which she turned her headlights off, drove on the wrong side of the road at 120kph on Peninsula Link and appeared to drive her vehicle at police. Her vehicle came to a stop following a collision in which there were no injuries. Her passenger told police that he had repeatedly asked her to pull over but she told him that police would abandon the chase if she drove dangerously enough. Multiple sets of registration plates, ID papers, live and spent ammunition and knuckledusters were found in her car. The applicant had 5 separate warrants for failing to appear in the Children’s Court. In the applicant’s favour were the following:

* she had stable accommodation with her supportive mother and was her mother’s full-time carer;
* she had detoxed from ice after one month's incarceration;
* Youth Justice support was now in place;
* Psychologist Aaron Cunningham had assessed her as having a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (making her even more susceptible in adult custody); and
* she was her mother's full-time carer.

In refusing bail, T.Forrest J said at [27]:

“I have considered the applicant's Aboriginality, as I must under s.3A of the Bail Act. I am obliged to take into account any issues that arise therefrom. I accept that Aboriginal Australians are very significantly overrepresented in our prisons and I consider that if this were a marginal case where a decision to grant bail or refuse it was a close run thing, then s.3A considerations may well operate to determine the application in the applicant's favour."

However, his Honour considered there were no conditions that would reduce to an acceptable level-

* the applicant’s risk of committing further offences; and
* her risk of endangering safety and welfare of the public.

His Honour regarded the driving behaviour as indicative of the applicant’s indifference to the safety of the public, her passenger and herself. The risks of further offending in this manner could led to catastrophic consequences. Those risks outweighed the s.3A considerations, the applicant’s youth, difficult personal circumstances, psychological health and strong family.

In *DPP v Hume* [2015] VSC 695 Hollingworth J took into account the applicant’s Aboriginal kinship obligations to his mother but determined that these were not sufficient to overcome the prosecution objections that the applicant represented an unacceptable risk.

In *TM v AH & Ors* [2014] VSC 560 the applicant TM was a 14 year old Aboriginal boy with an intellectual disability. After receiving a custodial sentence he was refused bail by a magistrate who held TM to be an unacceptable risk. In determining that TM had shown cause by a combination of factors and was not an unacceptable risk, Croucher J said at [31]-[32]:

“I am satisfied that TM has shown cause why his detention in custody is not justified. In particular, I am satisfied that TM’s tender age, his intellectual disability, his lack of prior convictions, the requirements of s 3A of the *Bail Act*, the reasonable prospect that he will receive a non-custodial sentence on appeal, and on the outstanding charges, and the proposed regime put in place for his release all, in combination, compel the view that his further detention in custody is not justified.

Secondly, in view of the same considerations, and particularly the plan put in place for his release, together with the conditions of bail I intend to impose, I am not satisfied that there is an unacceptable risk that, if granted bail, TM will commit offences or endanger his own or the public’s safety. In fact, I am positively satisfied that, while there will always be a risk of those things occurring, that risk is not unacceptable in the present case.”

In *An Application for Bail by Patricia Mitchell* [2013] VSC 59, in granting bail to a 22 year old Aboriginal woman charged with six dishonesty offences described by T Forrest J as “trivial when compared with other cases that come before this Court in this type of application”, his Honour said at [13]:

“I have been required to take into account the applicant’s Aboriginality, by virtue of s 3A of the *Bail Act* 1977. In the context of this application I would have granted bail regardless of any impact from that provision. That said, over policing of Aboriginal communities and their overrepresentation amongst the prison population are matters of public notoriety.”

In *Kirby v The Queen* [2013] VSC 602 Dixon J granted bail after taking into account at [7] the strong family ties of the Aboriginal applicant with the local community.

In *Re AB* [2016] VSC 446, T Forrest J granted bail to a 13 year old Aboriginal boy charged with offences including aggravated burglary, burglary, theft, theft of a motor vehicle, unlicensed driving, criminal damage, reckless endangerment and possession of a drug of dependence. At [15]-[16] his Honour stated that the community had a “vital interest in his rehabilitation at this early stage of his life. AB would be under the care of 2 DHS workers and a therapeutic worker while on bail.”

In *DPP v SE* [2017] VSC 13 the applicant was a 17 year old Aboriginal male with an intellectual disability who lived in a community-based residential facility under a child protection order. He pleaded guilty to theft of a motor vehicle and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. The magistrate adjourned the sentencing hearing for 8 days to obtain a pre-sentence report and refused bail in the interim. In granting bail Bell J referred at [24]-[27] to the five above-mentioned cases and at [29] & [37] to the case of *DPP v Woods* [2014] VSC 1 discussed below and stated at [34]:

“The considerations specified in s 3B in relation to children generally are closely connected with the considerations specified in s 3A in relation to Aboriginal persons. In the case of an application for bail by an Aboriginal child, the purpose of the two provisions overlap and they must therefore be read and applied together. The Aboriginality of such an applicant will often need to be taken into account under s 3A when considering the matters specified in s 3B. In the present case, Aboriginal cultural issues were taken into account [by me] under s 3A as regards the considerations specified in s 3B(1)(b) because bail would facilitate, but continued remand would have frustrated, the intended contact with SE’s Aboriginal family in Queensland. That was a significant consideration because, on the evidence in the reports that were provided to the court, maintaining that contact was an important aspect of SE’s developing individual and group identity as a young Aboriginal and would contribute to SE’s rehabilitation.”

After holding at [44]-[45] that SE had shown cause and at [48] that he was not an unacceptable risk of reoffending, Bell J stated at [49]:

“Moreover, taking into account that SE was an Aboriginal person aged 17 years with an intellectual disability, detention on remand was highly undesirable because of the high risk of physical and psychological harm and negative formative influence to which SE would be exposed (see generally ss. 3A and 3B). In this connection, I noted that the magistrate had recorded that SE had been the victim of an assault when previously in detention on remand and had special vulnerabilities that gave rise to protective issues…Release on conditional bail was the clearly preferable option (see s 3B(a)).

In *Re Brent Reker, Tara Egglestone and Pierce Williams* [2019] VSC 81 Beale J allowed a Director’s appeal against a grant of bail by a magistrate in circumstances where the magistrate had failed to give adequate reasons. In revoking bail, his Honour held that exceptional circumstances did not exist to warrant the grant of bail and that each of the respondents was an unacceptable risk. At [69] his Honour noted that Ms Egglestone’s aboriginality “is an important consideration [b]ut…it does not swamp all other considerations”.

In *Re Martyn Moore* [2019] VSC 344 the applicant was an 18 year old Aboriginal with IQ of 70 who was charged with aggravated carjacking, armed robbery and other offences. He had been on remand at the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct for 5 months. At the time of the alleged offending he was 17 years old. He had been extradited to Victoria on 27/12/2018 having completed a term of imprisonment and parole period in New South Wales. A term of 9 months imprisonment was imposed on the 20/01/2018 at the Children’s Court. On 17/07/2018 he was paroled. On 23/08/2018 his parole was breached and he was returned to custody to serve the remainder of the term of imprisonment. The alleged offending occurred between 11/08/2018 & 14/08/2018 whilst the applicant was subject to parole in New South Wales. The Applicant generally resided with his mother and brother in Dareton, New South Wales. The applicant’s case was that he should be granted bail with a condition that he reside at and participate in the Bunjilwarra residential program at Hastings, described by Priest JA at [35]-[36] as follows:

“The Bunjilwarra program provides a safe and supportive environment for young Aboriginal people to manage their alcohol and other drug problems through participation in therapeutic and structured programs designed to assist them to develop their living skills, and to strengthen their cultural identity and spiritual wellbeing. It aspires to assist young Aboriginal people to improve their physical, social and emotional wellbeing, and to strengthen their connection to family, community and culture, through the use of a holistic recovery model which includes individual and group therapy, as well as recreational, educational and vocational activities. The program also seeks to aid young Aboriginal people to develop alternative behaviours and coping strategies, and skills for resilience and reintegrating into the community, based on therapeutic community principles and Aboriginal cultural practices.

In the evening, residents of Bunjilwarra are supervised by an active night-shift staff member whose responsibility it is to conduct regular perimeter checks and to monitor the alarms on all external doors of the client dormitories. If any door is open, the alarm system is activated and alerts the staff member and a security company who will telephone the service directly to report the activation to Bunjilwarra management. If the applicant discharged himself, or was discharged by staff, prior to the completion of the program, Youth Justice would be immediately contacted.”

In granting bail with a Bunjilwarra residence and program attendance condition, Priest JA referred to ss.1B, 3AAA, 3A, 3B, 4AA, 4A & 4E of the **BA** and said at [39]-[40]:

“Recognising that the exceptional circumstances test is a stringent one, I am of the view that the applicant has satisfied the burden of showing that exceptional circumstances exist that justify the grant of bail. In my opinion, the fact that the applicant is a child; Aboriginal; and influenced by cognitive deficits which make him vulnerable in custody; coupled with the availability of a structured environment in which he will be taught to develop alternative behaviours and coping strategies based on therapeutic community principles and Aboriginal cultural practices, combine to satisfy the exceptional circumstances test.

So far as the suggested unacceptable risks that the applicant will fail to answer bail; commit an offence on bail; or endanger the safety or welfare of persons; are concerned, although I acknowledge that the applicant does present a substantial risk in each of the three ways advanced by the respondent, I consider that those risks can be acceptably ameliorated by strict conditions. Of course, I do not ignore the seriousness of the applicant’s offending, or the fact that the firearm has not been recovered, but, as I have said, any relevant risk presented by the applicant can be mitigated by conditions, so as to render the risks acceptable.”

In *Re LW* [2019] VSC 616 the applicant was a 16 year old Aboriginal boy who has an IQ of 53 and was in the care of DHHS on a care by Secretary order. His mother has a history of involvement with DHHS in relation to alcohol misuse, emotional and physical abuse and family violence. She provides ‘sporadic’ support to LW. Having been charged with two counts of theft of a motor vehicle and two counts of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, he was required to show exceptional circumstances. The respondent conceded exceptional circumstances but opposed bail on the basis of unacceptable risk. Lasry J granted bail – “with some considerable hesitation – on various conditions including judicial monitoring by Shepparton Children’s Court. His Honour said, *inter alia*:

[1] “In many respects, this applicant represents the consequence of the failings of our society. The applicant is a child, he is Indigenous, and he is intellectually disabled. As such, this application confronts the Court with very difficult and, at times, conflicting considerations.”

[20] “As will become apparent, it seemed to me on reading the materials provided in this application that a key to the future of this applicant is held by the Aboriginal Community. I have had the very great benefit of assistance in this hearing from representatives of that community, which I will turn to shortly.

[50] “Ultimately, in applying the provisions of the Act to this applicant who is not only [a child] but Indigenous, I am driven to the conclusion that the applicant has established exceptional circumstances and, therefore, qualifies for a grant of bail to that degree. Without too much hesitation, I am willing to put the faith of this Court in the Indigenous community.

[51] Enquiries were made over the last 24 hours and, through the cooperation of the County Court Chief Judge and Judge Taft, I have been favoured with information from Aunty Pam Pederson, a significant Aboriginal elder, and Luke Elgey, the applicant’s support worker. They took the view that significant part of the answer to the applicant’s difficulties may well lie in his Indigenous background and the willingness of his community to support him.

[52] Aunty Pam Pederson is a Yorta Yorta Elder, an advocate in the Koori Court system and an Aboriginal community leader. She has spent some time speaking to the applicant to make him understand the importance of his compliance with any bail conditions which might be imposed. She also impressed upon him the significance of the assistance that is being offered to him by the Indigenous community. I am persuaded that, given a reasonable degree of intensity of effort on the part of the Indigenous community, the applicant can be made to comply with what will be quite strict bail conditions.

[53] I acknowledge that the conclusion that I have reached — with some considerable hesitation — that the applicant should be released on bail is, in part, driven by a desire on my part that this boy not be left on the scrap heap of life. I am a most reluctant adherent to the choice between the applicant returning to custody or becoming a habitual offender. There must be another way. I suspect that Aunty Pam Pederson, in particular, agrees that there is another way. It is time society paid more attention to the ability, insight and influence of the Indigenous community. I propose to take that step. I propose to put my faith in those around the applicant who will support him, who will make him understand the importance of his heritage, who will encourage him, and who will facilitate his connection with people to steer him away from the kind of offending that he has been apparently pursuing until now.”

In *Re Foster* [2020] VSC 62 Taylor J granted bail to a 20 year old Aboriginal man with a turbulent upbringing, a history of polysubstance abuse and a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder who was charged with theft of a motor vehicle, possessing a drug of dependence, possessing an imitation firearm and two counts of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. He was subject to an adjourned undertaking consequent upon convictions for property and bail offences at time of alleged offending and had a history of non-compliance with bail orders. In granting bail Taylor J said at [33]-[36]:

[33] “In my view, the applicant has demonstrated exceptional circumstances. The concession of the respondent on this issue was both appropriate and fair. Although the test is stringent, the combination of the applicant’s youth, Aboriginality and his clear desire to attend Bunjilwarra to address his drug issues and explore his culture coupled with the likely delay to any final hearing of the charges demonstrate satisfaction of the exceptional circumstances test.

[34] Given his past history and drug issues, the applicant does present a significant risk of endangering the safety or welfare of persons, committing an offence while on bail and failing to answer bail if he is admitted to bail. However, in my view that risk can be mitigated by conditions, so as to render the risk acceptable.

[35] The availability of a place at Bunjilwarra is pivotal to this finding. The evidence establishes that Bunjilwarra is a purpose built 12-bed residential rehabilitation and healing service based in Hastings. Admission is voluntary and the formal program is three months long, but is flexible in time. The program is designed to achieve three outcomes for young Aboriginal people. First, to provide a safe and supportive environment to manage alcohol and/or drug issues through active participation in therapeutic programs targeted at development of living skills and strengthening of cultural identity and spiritual wellbeing. Second, improvement of physical, social and emotional wellbeing and strengthening of connection to family and community. Third, development of alternative behaviours, coping strategies and resilience for reintegration into the community. The program is based on therapeutic principles and Aboriginal cultural practices. These include, by way of example, counselling sessions, Narcotics Anonymous sessions, case management support, gym sessions, Landcare work, men’s business, women’s business and Koori art.

[36] It is also of significance that the applicant self-referred to the program prior to the alleged offending. Mr Dawson said that the workers at the program, through previous contact, had an understanding of the applicant’s strengths and weaknesses and would tailor the applicant’s sessions and activities accordingly.”

In *Re Dwayne Kennedy* [2020] VSC 187 (Kaye JA), the applicant had failed to attend court while on bail. There had been an apparent miscommunication whether he was required to attend Court in the light of Practice Direction No.3 of 2020 issued by the Magistrates’ Court in the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. The bail application was not opposed by the prosecution. Kaye JA found that exceptional circumstances were established and that the alleged charges did not pose a risk of harm or danger to the public. In the course of granting bail on the applicant’s own undertaking Kaye JA said at [4]:

“(1) The applicant is an Aboriginal man. He is the son of a Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta woman and of a Mutti Mutti man. His Aboriginality is relevant by reason of s 3A of the *Bail Act*. In particular, the relevant issues that arise from the applicant’s Aboriginality include:

1. As I have already mentioned, the applicant and his family are grieving the loss of his sister, and his period of remand prevents him being with family and community during the period of grief. Part of the grieving process for the applicant’s community involves being in the company of family for extended periods after the loss. In that context, the prohibition on visits by family members and others to prison would render the applicant’s period of remand even more onerous.
2. As an Aboriginal man, the applicant belongs to a particularly vulnerable section of the community, who are over-represented in the criminal justice system, and who also have poorer health outcomes than non-Aboriginal persons. In that connection, while he is in custody, the applicant may be at greater risk of serious infection from the COVID-19 virus than otherwise.

(2) The applicant has an acquired brain injury and symptoms of severe cognitive and mental health issues. Those factors make him vulnerable in the confines of a custodial environment. In addition, they would render a period of custody more onerous for him.

(3) If the applicant is released on bail, he has available to him culturally appropriate assistance and treatment through the Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative. In addition, he has accommodation available to him, as he will be residing with his mother in her home in Mooroopna.”

In *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 the appellant was an intellectually disabled 15 year old Aboriginal child who was facing a large number of charges including attempted armed robbery, burglary, theft, criminal damage, theft of motor vehicles, obtaining property by deception, unlawful assault, unlicensed driving, careless driving & 67 charges of committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. It was common ground that exceptional circumstances were made out. One of the five circumstances which led the Court of Appeal to hold that the appellant was not an unacceptable risk was the appellant’s Aboriginal heritage. At [58]-[60] Maxwell P & Kaye JA said:

[58] “Section 3A, and s 3AAA(1)(h), of the Act provide that in making a determination under the Act, the Court must take into account any issues that arise due to a person’s Aboriginality, including the person’s cultural background, and the person’s ties to extended family or place. Those provisions are an important and salutary recognition that cultural connection can play a significant role in the rehabilitation of offenders who are of Aboriginal heritage. A number of programs have been developed in Victoria, and in other jurisdictions, which demonstrate that the reconnection of an Aboriginal offender with culture and Country can constitute a pivotal factor diverting such a person from entrenched offending behaviour.

[59] The provisions in the Act are also a recognition of the unacceptable over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in custody, which regrettably persists some 30 years after the landmark report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. That report addressed the factors that contributed to those incarceration rates, including a number of failures by the criminal justice system to deal justly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons who come before the courts. The courts have a duty, in cases such as this, to be conscious of the need to avoid compounding those incarceration rates, unless there is good cause to do so: *Re Chafer-Smith* [2014] VSC 51, [27] (T Forrest J).

[60] The appellant identifies as an Aboriginal person through his mother’s side. The Department of Health and Human Services is actively attempting to create a cultural plan for him. Due to his mother’s lack of engagement with the Department, his Aboriginality has only relatively recently been disclosed, and accordingly no cultural plan is currently in place. However, we note that the appellant has been referred to the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (‘VACCA’) for additional cultural support.”

In *Re Hooper (No.2)* [2021] VSC 476 the 37 year old applicant was charged with murder, aggravated home invasion, kidnapping, false imprisonment and intentionally causing injury in circumstances where it was an alleged planned murder of her husband by a group of offenders in retribution against him due to suspected sexual abuse of children. Bail was originally refused on 15/04/2020. New facts and circumstances were conceded by the prosecution. The applicant is the mother of 7 children who, like their mother, identify as Aboriginal. She has strong family, cultural and community supports and limited prior convictions. A further long delay was anticipated and counsel highlighted difficult conditions in custody due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In granting bail Tinney J found that exceptional circumstances were established and that there was no unacceptable risk. At [30(d)] under the heading *“The applicant’s Aboriginality and the desire of Parliament and the courts to give weight to the implications arising from the detention of Aboriginal people”*, his Honour said:

“Mr McMahon referred to section [3A](https://jade.io/article/281638/section/1428) of the Act, the decision of [*HA*](https://jade.io/article/797550) and the contents of the affidavit in support by [JP] in support of the contention that the Aboriginality of the applicant is an important matter where bail is concerned in this case. In explanation for the denial by the applicant in the police interviews of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, it was indicated that the applicant was fearful that she would be treated poorly if police knew she was an Aboriginal person. As for why the applicant’s Aboriginality was not relied upon by her in the first application before me, nothing was said. It is apparent that for some reason she did not inform her then lawyers of the fact. Mr McMahon acknowledged that the applicant ‘has had a variable connection to her heritage’. As an adult in particular, she ‘has had ongoing, varying involvement with local Aboriginal community’. All of the applicant’s children identify as Aboriginal, and their fathers were Aboriginal men. Since her incarceration, it was submitted that the applicant has connected much more strongly with her Aboriginal identity ‘and found great comfort, stability and support in doing so’. Mr McMahon submitted that s [3A](https://jade.io/article/281638/section/1428) of the Act represents, inter alia, ‘a recognition of the historical disadvantage of Aboriginal people and the reality of increased incarceration, increased separation of children from their parents, from their mothers, from their homes, and so on’. Mr McMahon referred to Royal Commission reports on the matter of Aboriginal disadvantage and vulnerability. He described the applicant as ‘almost an archetype of that disadvantage’. A number of examples of the involvement of the applicant and her family in Aboriginal culture were set out in the affidavit and other material. Mr McMahon noted that many of the organisations which are providing assistance to the applicant, and would help her should she be released on bail, are Aboriginal organisations. Mr McMahon distinguished this case from the sort of case considered by Beale J in [*Re Reker*](https://jade.io/article/635018)[2019] VSC 81 at [69] in which it was pointed out that the applicant’s Aboriginality should not overwhelm other considerations in the application. In that case, it was submitted, the Aboriginality was unimportant. Not so in this case where it is very significant.”

At [30(f)] under the heading *“The availability of strong and significant cultural and community supports”* his Honour said:

“The details of the supports on offer to the applicant were set out in the affidavit in support. These include the services of WestCASA, the Australian Community Support Organisation (‘ACSO’), and The Torch. It was also noted that in custody, the applicant has attended meetings of AA and NA. WestCASA has a trauma service located within Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. A report from WestCASA indicates that having been proactive in self-referring to the service, and having spent time on a waiting list, the applicant had attended no fewer than 39 counselling sessions up to April 2021. According to the report, she has demonstrated motivation to work on her past issues involving trauma, and is committed to her healing. Mr McMahon also detailed the services provided in the past and available to the applicant in future from the other organisations. In respect of ACSO, a report from the organisation indicates that they have been working with the applicant in custody to identify her needs. Upon her release she would be referred to the office in Gippsland for intake and assessment. An appointment with the Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association has been organised with a view to a mental health plan being prepared. A reintegration plan has been prepared for her release, and upon her release, she would be provided with assertive outreach for three months. In addition to all of the above, Mr McMahon emphasised the expertise of his instructors in being able to provide a range of services and support for women in trouble. Their involvement would enable the necessary connections to be made swiftly and reliably. Mr McMahon submitted that the Court *‘was being presented with…a significant, coherent, well thought out , mutually supportive package for our client to provide all of the assurance that could possibly be done, that granting bail to our client would not be a mistake.’”*

In his detailed analysis of the application of ss.3A & 3AAA(1)(h) to the circumstances of the applicant, Tinney J said at [52]-[54]:

[52] “To my mind, the Aboriginal heritage of the applicant is a matter of great importance in the application. In [*HA*](https://jade.io/article/797550) [2021] VSCA 64, the Court of Appeal, in an appeal concerning the refusal of a grant of bail to an intellectually disabled Aboriginal child, stated at [58]-[59] [see the quotation set out above in the extract from *HA*].

[53] It is regrettable that the Aboriginal status of the applicant was seemingly not known to the legal representatives of the applicant, or the Court, sooner than it was. Having said that, the material currently before the Court, the legitimacy of which has not been challenged, clearly shows that notwithstanding the inconsistent engagement of the applicant with her culture in the past, the period of her incarceration has permitted, if not brought about, a rekindling of that connection. The indications are that should she be released on bail, that connection, which would be to the undeniable benefit of herself and her children, may well be able to be substantially strengthened to the long-term advantage of her whole family, and her place in the indigenous community may serve to increase her prospects of successfully complying with bail.

[54] I take into account in the overall application, as I am required by law to do, the considerations in s [3A](https://jade.io/article/281638/section/1428) of the Act, and when considering the surrounding circumstances as is required of me in connection with both steps in the two-step process of bail, I have regard to the special vulnerability of the applicant by virtue of her Aboriginal heritage: see s [3AAA(1)(h)](https://jade.io/article/281638/section/778776) of the Act. In the circumstances of the application, and notwithstanding the fact that the applicant’s connection with her heritage has not been consistently strong over the years, her Aboriginality is a very important matter in this application.”

In *Re Vicky McKay* [2024] VSC 59 the applicant, a 48 year old Yorta Yorta woman, was charged with intentionally causing serious injury to the complainant whom she had met earlier in the day in the context of purchasing drugs. After the two returned to the applicant’s unit, the complainant went into a bedroom. The applicant became very agitated saying that it was the room of her late son. She became increasingly agitated and took up two kitchen knives and stabbed the complainant multiple times, causing serious injury to his abdomen and limbs requiring hospitalisation including a period in ICU. The applicant does not dispute stabbing the complainant. Self-defence will be the critical issue at the trial. At the time of the alleged offending, the applicant was serving an 18 month CCO imposed in the County Court as part of a combined sentence that was imposed for intentionally causing injury and contravening a family violence intervention order by stabbing her then-partner multiple times with a knife. The applicant has a significant history of trauma, bereavement, substance dependence and homelessness. She has long-term problems with drugs including heroin and substantial mental health problems including records of depression, general and specific anxiety, and vulnerability to substance abuse. She also has a lamentable criminal history including 42 prior convictions for bail-related offending. At [20]-[27] Niall JA summarised the applicant’s submissions In relation to the s.3A considerations as follows:

[20] “The applicant emphasises the mandatory considerations which the Court must take into account under s 3A of the Act, including the applicant’s cultural background, ties to extended family or place, and other relevant cultural issues or obligations.

[21] The applicant submits that bail is a significant matter for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, both because of their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system and for cultural reasons.

[22] It is emphasised that, as a child, the applicant was often separated from her mother due to drug and alcohol abuse. Further, the applicant has experienced significant family violence in her relationships, leading to homelessness, trauma and substance abuse from an early age.

[23] In this context, it is submitted that the applicant figures in the overrepresentation of Aboriginal women who experience intergenerational trauma which leads to substance abuse, family violence, and separation from family. It is also noted that Aboriginal women in Victoria are 6.5 times more likely to report being the victim of family violence offences than non-Aboriginal people.

[24] The applicant asserts that her lengthy criminal history should be viewed in light of this, in particular the difficulties that Aboriginal women experience in accessing culturally-appropriate support for drug and alcohol use, family violence and trauma.

[25] Similarly, the applicant submits that her failure to appear at court, offending while on bail, and poor compliance with bail conditions, ought to be viewed in the context of her Aboriginality and her vulnerability.

[26] The applicant says that her lack of compliance with the CCO imposed in 2021 should be considered in the same respect, noting family bereavement, , that she was the victim of a burglary, and that she had been assaulted by her former partner.

[27] The applicant also relies on *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [58]‑[59] for the proposition that culturally-appropriate programs (such as those available to the applicant upon release) are pivotal in diverting Aboriginal offenders from entrenched offending behaviour, and are relevant both to the assessment of risk and to the establishment of exceptional circumstances.”

Though refusing bail Niall JA acknowledged at [34]:

“The fact that the applicant is an indigenous woman is an important matter that this Court must take into account in the manner identified in the Bail Act and as explained in decisions of this Court and the Court of Appeal. It is important that the court considering whether to grant bail assess whether there are alternatives which can ameliorate or avoid incarceration on remand and be conscious of the very real and additional burdens that incarceration has for indigenous people.”

In *Re Terei* [2024] VSC 294, in granting bail for 19 days to a 32 year old Aboriginal woman with drug addiction issues who was charged with serious firearms and property offences, Incerti J said at [55]‑[61] (citations largely omitted and emphases added):

[55] “This application for bail comes before the Court only months after the introduction of what members of the Victorian Parliament considered ‘significant reforms’ to the *Bail Act 1977*. A large part of these reforms was a focus on the Aboriginality of the applicant, requiring the Court to pay particular attention to this aspect of an applicant’s cultural identity in an attempt to make the bail system, in the words of the Attorney-General, ‘safer, fairer and more balanced’. As it was put in the Second Reading Speech, the changes are ‘intended to support the common law responsibility on bail decision makers to ensure incarceration rates of Aboriginal peoples are not further compounded unless there is good reason’.

[56] The critical provision … is s 3A. This section requires the bail decision maker to ‘take into account any issues that arise due to a person’s Aboriginality’ and sets out a non-exhaustive list of considerations.

[57] The crucial phrase in this provision, and the phrase that must be given careful consideration if these reforms are to be as ‘significant’ as intended, is *take into account*. It is a somewhat innocuous phrase and appears another 18 times throughout the Act. However, in this section, we cannot allow the process of *taking into account* the Aboriginality of an applicant to become anything less than the radical transformation to the decision making process that was called for by the *Yoorrook for Justice* Report and following the tragic death of Veronica Nelson. It cannot simply become a box-ticking exercise on the way to considering the other statutory elements in the bail flow chart. It must inform every consideration and the perception of every aspect of the applicant’s application and encourage us to not contribute to incarceration levels unless there is a *good reason* to do so. It requires the decision maker to look beyond the personal circumstances of the applicant and to the entrenched disadvantages of a class of people of which the applicant is a part.

**[58] It is a clearer exercise to see how the provision informs the consideration of ‘exceptional circumstances’ and ‘compelling reasons’ for the grant of bail in ss 4A and 4C. But the provision deliberately sits apart from the other ‘surrounding circumstances’ in s 3 and must equally apply when considering the ‘unacceptable risk’ test under s 4E.**

[59] As the Court of Appeal affirmed in *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 at [6], the assessment of ‘unacceptable risk’ must ‘be relative to all the circumstances’. I consider that this makes the unacceptable risk test a balancing act, between the possible risks outlined in s 4E(1)(a) and all of the circumstances of the applicant. **When considering unacceptable risk for an Aboriginal person, the decision maker must now have each of the factors identified in s 3A at the forefront of their reasoning.** As such, particularly in applications like this one where there are undeniable elements of risk and the applicant’s risk undoubtedly teeters on the edge of being unacceptable, the taking into account of the s 3A factors may nevertheless mean that the applicant does not pose an unacceptable risk.

[60] While the increased emphasis on the applicant’s Aboriginality may appear to have the practical effect of requiring more of the respondent in demonstrating that any risk is ‘unacceptable’, it would be a mistake to miss the focus of these reforms on the reasoning process of the decision maker, especially of ss 3A(1)(a) to (c) which apply to any person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. When faced with any application, but especially an application such as this one, the decision maker must take into account that they have an opportunity to not contribute to the systemic incarceration of Aboriginal persons. This notes that Ms Terei is, by way of her Aboriginality alone, at higher risk of harm in custody. A failure of our system to recognise that Aboriginal people, especially women, are inherently vulnerable was a chief finding in the inquest into the death in custody of Veronica Nelson and in *Yoorrook for Justice*.

[61] **This is by no means to suggest that the bail of an Aboriginal person becomes a foregone conclusion and usurps the discretion of the decision maker. It is not a more lenient test and the paramount consideration remains the safety of the community and the applicant from risk which is an unacceptable risk. However, the applicant’s Aboriginality is a weighty factor in bail applications.**” [emphasis added]

When the case returned before Incerti J the respondent opposed an extension of bail for the reasons set out in *Re Terei (No 2)* [2024] VSC 352 at [5]-[7]. However, in extending bail her Honour said at [27]:

“I have concluded that Ms Terei does not pose an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any other person, failing to answer bail and interfering with a witness or otherwise obstructing the course of justice. To the contrary, I consider Ms Terei has endeavoured to the best of her ability to meet the obligations and responsibilities imposed upon her by the bail conditions I set on 30 May 2024. The failure is the lack of resources and support in the community for Ms Terei, who is vulnerable and in need of protection and help as she endeavours to remain in the community safely and lawfully.”

Her Honour also noted at [22]-[23] (citation omitted):

[22] “While the recent amendments to the *Bail Act 1977 (Vic)* are a significant step towards making the bail system safer and more balanced for Aboriginal persons, the failure to have corresponding social policy and social reforms that provide the practical assistance and support to people such as Ms Terei will undermine the outcomes envisaged by the amendments.

[23] It is nevertheless worth recognising that, without the recent amendments repealing s 30A (offence to contravene certain conduct conditions), Ms Terei would undoubtedly have been arrested and potentially remanded prior to this bail hearing. This change represents a significant step in the right direction and demonstrates that the amendments do operate effectively in an area that previously had a ‘disproportionate impact on women, Aboriginal people and people experiencing disadvantage’.”

In *Re Terei (No 3)* [2024] VSC 423 the respondent was alleged to have committed the further offence of perverting the course of justice and had failed to appear at her committal and at a subsequent judicial monitoring hearing before Incerti J. Bail was revoked, Incerti J noting at [6]-[7] & [9]-[13]:

[6] “There is in many ways nothing remarkable about this course of events. Ms Terei is a vulnerable person who presents to the Court with complex mental health issues, a history of family violence, serious drug abuse and a significant history of interface with the justice system. Her historical offending does not involve crimes of violence. Ms Terei was always going to pose a risk on bail, but it was my view that the risk could be ameliorated with strict bail conditions.

[7] The unusual and troubling aspect is the allegation that Ms Terei has attempted to pervert the course of justice by lying about her Aboriginality…

[9] Before this Court there was evidence by way of affidavit that Ms Terei inherited her Aboriginality from her maternal line and that her mother passed away when she was three years old. This evidence was obtained on instructions from Ms Terei.

[10] In most cases, and certainly in my experience, proof of Aboriginality has not been an issue and is ordinarily not challenged. Evidence of a person’s Aboriginality is provided by affidavit as occurred in this case. This is an appropriate manner in which evidence of this kind is to be provided to the Court for the purpose of a bail application. I can see no reason why this should change or that an applicant or their legal representative should be required to do anything more than set out the basis of a person’s Aboriginality as was done in this case. The circumstances of this case are unique and allegedly involve blatant deception about an individual’s Aboriginality.

[11] Following the bail applications on 30 May and 17 June 2024, the informant had real concerns about Ms Terei and took the time to listen to an extensive number of Arunta phone recordings between Ms Terei, Luke Wells and Donna Wells made prior to 30 May 2024, while Ms Terei was in custody.

[12] The evidence before me, arising from enquiries made following comments during these calls, is that Ms Terei’s mother is from New Zealand, is not Aboriginal and still lives in New Zealand. It is therefore alleged that Ms Terei claimed her Aboriginality from her maternal line, knowing it was untrue, ‘in order to have the Court consider s 3A of the Bail Act when she was not entitled to do so’. While this is not the time to determine the current allegations made against Ms Terei, the Arunta phone recordings provide strong evidence that Ms Terei is not an Aboriginal person and sought to gain some benefit in the bail application on the basis of identifying as an Aboriginal person.

[13] The developments in this particular case do not in any way alter my comments in *Re Terei* [2024] VSC 294 at [55]-[61]. **The amendments to the Bail Act 1977 (Vic), and in particular s 3A, are a call to action to bail decision-makers to look beyond the personal circumstances of the individual applicant and to be guided by the critical factors set out in s 3A. It is, as I said, more than simply a box ticking exercise. The decision-maker must endeavour to not contribute to the historic overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody unless there is good reason to do so. However, I repeat that the amendments have not created a more lenient test for Aboriginal persons. The amendments are a recognition of specific factors that uniquely affect Aboriginal persons and that must be taken into account when determining a bail application for an Aboriginal person.**” [emphasis added]

In *Re KM* [2024] VSC 802 the 40 year old Aboriginal applicant was charged with a number of offences alleged to have occurred between 1 February 2021 and 4 July 2024, including: (a) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Cannabis, in a quantity that it not less than a commercial quantity; (b) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Amphetamine, in a quantity that it not less than a commercial quantity; and (c) Traffick a drug of dependence, namely Methylamphetamine. The applicant had been on remand for approximately 3 months. In finding exceptional circumstances and that the applicant was not an unacceptable risk, Incerti J said at [24]-[26] & [39]-[49] (emphasis added):

[24] “Ms KM has seven children, three with a partner she met when she was 18 and four with her current partner. Both relationships are characterised by family violence. Her first partner was reportedly chaotic, violent and unpredictable. Her current partner was charged with family violence related offences in 2013 and there has been involvement from the Department of Human Services with the family.

[25] Ms KM returned to [city name deleted] in her mid-thirties and commenced using illicit substances about five years ago. She has reportedly been using four to six Dexamphetamine tablets daily and heavy cocaine and amphetamine usage over the weekend (along with alcohol).

[26] Five of the applicant’s children still reside at home. The Court was provided with extensive materials that demonstrate the various challenges and needs of her children, including Hirschprung’s disease, learning difficulties and autism.

...

[39] “**A person’s Aboriginality is not necessarily an exceptional circumstance by itself. However, it is important to consider the applicant’s circumstances through the lens of s 3A, especially the general considerations in s 3A(a)-(c).**

[40] **In the present application, the applicant relies on her role as a primary carer for her five children, the inherent delay of complex matters like this one, the availability of supports, and her lack of a criminal history. Taken altogether, these factors may well constitute exceptional circumstances by themselves. When viewed through the prism of s 3A, the finding becomes almost irresistible.**

[41] Ms KM is at the very beginning of her engagement with the custodial system. The only contact she has previously had with the justice system resulted in a bond with non-conviction and, on another occasion, a fine. This occurred over 20 years ago. It is reasonable for the purposes of this application to consider that Ms KM does not have a criminal history. This is a weighty factor.

[42] That is not to minimise the charges. **This is undoubtedly significant offending, especially for a woman not otherwise known to the law, and the illegal drug trade has dire consequences for all aspects of our society.** The offending has the potential to carry a lengthy sentence, even though there appear to be triable issues in this matter.

[43] Despite this, the complexity of any trafficking matter will undoubtedly cause some delay. While this is not the type of inordinate delay that constitutes an exceptional circumstance by itself, it will represent an extended period in which an Aboriginal woman with substance abuse issues will remain on remand awaiting a trial. It is the combination of these factors that take this case towards establishing exceptional circumstances.

[44] It is preferable to consider an application for bail as a possible inflection point. **Ms KM has the motivation and the access to services while she is on bail that may address a drug addiction that appears central to her offending. She has the opportunity to engage in the MASC program and she is willing to finance this service herself. The opportunity to address addiction or mental health is critical for any application for bail. And for Ms KM, it is an opportunity to reduce the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody and to protect against the criminogenic environment of custody.**

[45] **What is equally clear is that incarceration has a lasting impact on the families and children of the offender. The incarceration of a parent may impact negatively on the physical and mental health of the children of an offender, their development, education and employment outcomes:** Bugmy Bar Book Committee, ‘Impacts of Imprisonment and Remand in Custody’ in Bugmy Bar Book (online, November 2022), 15‑16. I reject the submission that Ms KM’s children are doing fine while their mother is on remand. The children of incarcerated persons are the ‘invisible victims’ of the criminal justice system: Bugmy Bar Book Committee, ‘Incarceration of a Parent or Caregiver’ in Bugmy Bar Book (online, September 2023), 1. **The parenting duties and the objective of keeping families together is a significant factor in any application. When I consider the historic separation of Aboriginal families, along with Ms KM’s own difficult family upbringing, I see no good reason to contribute to her continued incarceration at this stage. I therefore consider that there are exceptional circumstances justifying the grant of bail.**

[46] There is very real risk that Ms KM will re-offend. She has demonstrated a capacity to manage an extensive trafficking operation from the very location where she hopes to reside on bail and it is difficult to envisage conditions that will address this risk.

[47] Any application for bail has risk. The question is whether the risk is acceptable. As I have said on previous occasions, section 3A adds an important dimension to the consideration of whether the risk is acceptable. We must consider whether the risk Ms Males poses is so high that we are also willing to accept the ongoing incarceration of another Aboriginal person.

[48] **The factors that go to demonstrating exceptional circumstances are equally applicable to the unacceptable risk test. Most importantly, I consider that the availability of alcohol and drug counselling, which is clearly the biggest risk factor for the applicant, presents an important protective factor.** Ms KM has agreed to undertake twice weekly urine testing as a condition of bail. A deviation from her apparent commitment to recovery is also likely to indicate an increased risk that she will continue to offend.

[49] On balance, I consider that Ms KM does not pose an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety of any other person.”

In granting bail to the Aboriginal applicant in *Re Thorpe* [2024] VSC 414 – the facts of which are detailed in **subsection 9.4.1.1** – Elliott J described the application of s.3A of the **BA** at [47]-[53] as follows [some footnotes omitted]:

[47] The considerations outlined in paragraphs (a) to (c) are directed towards ensuring that a bail decision maker has regard to systemic and multigenerational disadvantages faced by Aboriginal peoples, and therefore have general application to any bail application made by an Aboriginal person. While the considerations enumerated in paragraph (d) more obviously concern an applicant’s personal circumstances, they must nevertheless be viewed through the lens of the applicant’s history and culture, with the matters referred to in paragraphs (a) to (c) (and, if applicable, paragraph (e)) in mind.

[48] The list of considerations under section 3A(1) was significantly broadened in March 2024, following ‘significant’ reforms to the Bail Act directed in part towards addressing the discriminatory impact of the bail system on Aboriginal peoples and the grossly disproportionate rates of remand among members of their communities. As they pertain to section 3A, the reforms are intended to ensure that courts have greater regard to the broader systemic factors that have driven inequality; as well as circumstances relevant to Aboriginal people, including factors that make them particularly vulnerable in custody. In this way, the provision supports the common law requirement that bail decision makers must ‘ensure incarceration rates of Aboriginal peoples are not further compounded unless there is good reason’.

[49] This responsibility must be kept front of mind in the practical application of s.3A(1). The significance of s.3A is evident from the fact that it is a standalone provision, rather than incorporated into the broader list of surrounding circumstances under s.3AAA(1). Its significance is also confirmed by the fact that, following the recent reforms to the Bail Act, the considerations in s.3A(1) must be taken into account regardless of the extent or duration of an applicant’s connection to their culture or heritage: s.3A(4); and those in paragraphs (a) to (c) must be taken into account whether or not any evidence or information in respect of these issues is put before the court: s.3A(3). It is then further reinforced by the requirement for the court, when refusing to grant bail to an Aboriginal person, to expressly identify the specific matters listed under s.3A(1) to which regard has been had: s.3A(5).

[50] In short, although the requirements of the provision are not intended to be onerous, the process of taking an applicant’s Aboriginality into account in the manner that s.3A demands must underpin any determination made under the Bail Act in respect of an Aboriginal person, including whether exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail exist, and also whether an applicant poses an unacceptable risk of the kind described under s.4E(1).

[51] This is of course not to suggest that an Aboriginal applicant charged with committing serious crimes should automatically be granted bail. Nor does it mean that a more lenient test is to be applied in assessing exceptionality or risk in an application for bail made by an Aboriginal person. However, the Aboriginality of an applicant would ordinarily be a ‘weighty factor’ {*Re Terei* [2024] VSC 294, [61]} to which serious regard must be given in any application for bail.

[52] The considerations listed under s.3A must also be understood in light of the cultural rights possessed by Aboriginal peoples and protected under s.19 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic): see also *Re GG* [2021] VSC 12, [44]; *DPP v SE* [2017] VSC 13, [21]. This includes the rights of Aboriginal peoples to enjoy their identity and culture and to maintain their language, their kinship ties and their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land, waters and other resources.

[53] More generally, in interpreting and applying the Bail Act, including each of the sections outlined above, the court is required to take into account the guiding principles set out in s.1B. These include competing considerations of maximising the safety of the community, and the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty: Re Ceylan [2018] VSC 361, [31]‑[32].”

In granting bail to the 35 year old Aboriginal applicant in *Re McLaughlin* [2024] VSC 706 – the facts of which are detailed in **subsection 9.4.2.2** – Incerti J made the following comprehensive observations about s.3A **BA** at [41]-[48] & [55]:

[41] “The recent reforms focused, in large part, on the consideration of an applicant’s Aboriginality when a decision-maker is faced with an application for bail. The reforms require the Court to actively engage with the applicant’s cultural identity in both a specific and a general way. The legislature is very clear in its intention: the engagement with the applicant’s Aboriginality is ‘to support the common law responsibility on bail decision makers to ensure incarceration rates of Aboriginal peoples are not further compounded unless there is good reason’: Victoria, Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly, 31 August 2023, 2941 (Harriet Shing, Minister for Water, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Equality).

[42] Section 3A requires the Court to ‘take into account any issues that arise due to a person’s Aboriginality’ and provides a non-exhaustive list of considerations. Subsections (a)-(c) are general factors that apply to an application by any Aboriginal person, including the systemic over-representation in the criminal justice system, the risk of harm that custody poses, and the importance of maintaining and developing cultural connection and kinship. Sub-section (d) calls for an examination of the specific circumstances of the applicant, including their experiences during childhood and any mental illness. Sub-section (e) directs the Court to approach the circumstances more broadly and consider any other cultural issues or obligations, such as the impact of ongoing remand on the prospects of accessing the Koori court system or any other culturally specific activities that would be accessible on bail.

[43] The consideration of these factors is necessarily an involved process. It requires the decision maker to contemplate what the historic and ongoing overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody means for the individual before them. It also requires the decision maker to contemplate the specific circumstances of the individual within the broader context of their cultural identity and to view their circumstances through that lens. The Bugmy Bar Book provides carefully researched materials that speak to the significance of this cultural identity on every aspect of the individual and their application.

[44] The consideration under s 3A has an important role to play in assessing whether the applicant has established exceptional circumstances or a compelling reason justifying the grant of bail. In many instances, the applicant’s Aboriginality and their specific circumstances, viewed in the context of systemic incarceration, may satisfy these tests. This naturally requires consideration of the seriousness of the offending and each application will turn on its facts. However, factors that are ordinarily significant, such as whether the applicant is likely to spend more time on remand than their eventual sentence, will gain added strength when viewed through the particular lens of s 3A.

[45] The consideration of Aboriginality arguably has even more work to do in considering whether the applicant poses an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety of any person, interfering with a witness or failing to surrender.

[46] The assessment of risk turns on all of the circumstances of the individual and their offending. There will never be an absence of any risk. The real enquiry is about the level of risk that we are content to ‘accept’ on an application and as a society. This test requires the bail decision maker to balance the apparent risk of the applicant with the conditions that are available to mitigate this risk and to determine if this reaches an acceptable level.

[47] The expansion of s 3A introduces an additional factor into this equation. The decision maker must consider whether the risk outweighs the inherent harm in contributing to the over-incarceration of Aboriginal people. This brings to life the legislature’s intention to only contribute to this damning statistic where there is ‘good reason’. This does not make an application for bail easier for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person; very serious offending or the presence of family violence may well provide that good reason and the consideration of s 3A may not tip the scales of risk. Nevertheless, it is a weighty consideration.

[48] The availability of supports is an important factor in the assessment of risk, especially culturally appropriate programs. This does not require the supports to be so encompassing as to reduce risk to a negligible degree. In many instances, the addition of some supports may prove a circuit-breaker and a protective force, and may reduce risk to an acceptable degree. It is also important to not over-support, such that an individual is overwhelmed upon release and suffocates amidst services.”

...

[55] “Finally, and as I have explored above, the s 3A considerations are a strongly determinative factor in assessing whether the risk is unacceptable. It is significant that the grant of bail may assist the applicant in seeking a resolution to this matter through the Koori Court. In any event, it is clear from the applicant’s early engagement with art and her efforts to honour her late father, that her culture is an important protective factor. The availability of culturally appropriate services as part of her bail conditions are an important consideration. Although I accept there is risk in this grant of bail, I see no good reason to contribute to the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody by keeping Ms McLaughlin incarcerated.”

In granting bail to the 31 year old Aboriginal applicant in *Re RK* [2024] VSC 792 – the facts of which are detailed in **subsection 9.4.1.1** – Niall J made the following observations about s.3A **BA** at [6]:

“Section 3A in its current form was introduced by s 33 of the *Bail Amendment Act 2023*. In the second reading speech, the Minister said that s 3A required bail decision-makers to consider ‘broader systemic factors that drive inequality as well as circumstances relevant to Aboriginal people’ and that the provision was ‘intended to support the common law responsibility on bail decision makers to ensure incarceration rates of Aboriginal peoples are not further compounded unless there is good reason’. The considerations in s 3A are relevant both to the assessment of exceptional circumstances and unacceptable risk, which are explained below: see notes to ss.4A(3) & 4E(3)(a) of the Act; see also *Re Terei* [2024] VSC 294 at [58]. As Incerti J observed in *Re Terei* at [61]:

This is by no means to suggest that the bail of an Aboriginal person becomes a foregone conclusion and usurps the discretion of the decision maker. It is not a more lenient test and the paramount consideration remains the safety of the community and the applicant from risk which is an unacceptable risk. However, the applicant's Aboriginality is a weighty factor in bail applications.

See also *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [58]-[59] in relation to a previous version of the provision.

See also the following cases summarised in **subsections 9.4.1.1 & 9.4.2.2**:

* *Re TH* [2021] VSC 597 per Fox J, esp. at [49].
* *Re Murray* [2023] VSC 266, esp. at [32] and at [79] where Niall JA said: “Given his age, rehabilitation would be a paramount consideration in any sentencing also reducing the potential for a further period of incarceration. I also take into account that incarceration risks further alienating the applicant from his culture and from the positive supports that are presently available. I take s 3A of the Act into account in reaching this finding.”
* *Re DZ (a pseudonym)* [2024] VSC 687 esp. at [42]-[48].

### **9.4.12 Relevance of youth**

The differences between bail provisions for adults and those for children are detailed in **sections 9.2.1**.

Additional considerations in s.3B which a bail decision must take into account in making a determination under the **BA** in relation to a child are detailed in section **9.2.2**. See also **section 9.5.14** below.

In *DPP v Woods* [2014] VSC 1 the applicant Wayne Woods (a pseudonym) was aged 17y 3m and had been on remand at a YJC for 2 weeks. He was charged with attempted burglary, theft of a screwdriver, intentionally/recklessly causing serious injury, affray and assaulting/hindering a protective services officer at Malvern Railway Station in company with a large group of others. At the time he was on bail for other charges of theft and property damage. He had breached the curfew and other conditions and had been involved in inappropriate Facebook activity. Bail had been refused on the basis that he had failed to show cause and was an unacceptable risk of reoffending. A Youth Justice case manager gave impressive evidence in the Supreme Court on his behalf. The prosecution case was “not weak” and the applicant had been offending and breaching bail. However, he came from a stable family, was supported by his parents and had been attempting to rehabilitate himself. Youth Justice was prepared to supervise his participation in an intensive bail program and to supervise any conditions of bail. In finding that the applicant had **shown cause** and was **not an unacceptable risk**, Bell J said at [96]‑[100]:

[96] “I accept the prosecution submissions that the applicant’s behaviour and apparent pattern of offending would suggest that he is at risk of committing further offences on bail. Without proper supervision and rehabilitation, he might endanger the safety and welfare of members of the public. He is not at risk of failing to surrender himself into custody or interfering with witnesses or obstructing the course of justice. Having regard to the evidence of his Youth Justice case officer, I am satisfied that the risks which do exist can be well managed by release on bail and appropriate conditions, with which he agrees. With these conditions, he would not be an unacceptable risk.

[97] “Taking into account that the applicant is a youth, that he has not previously been in criminal custody and that, on proper conditions, he would not be an unacceptable risk if released on bail, I find that he has shown cause why his detention in custody is not justified.”

[98] On the evidence, release of the applicant on his own undertaking with only a condition to appear is out of the question. He presents with risks of re-offending which can and should be managed. Conditions are needed to reduce the likelihood of him committing further offences and endangering the safety or welfare of members of the public whilst on bail. Release with conduct conditions is therefore warranted. Having regard to the applicant’s changed attitude and circumstances, these conditions are likely to be kept. A curfew condition is necessary in the circumstances but might be relaxed if the applicant becomes a lesser risk, and I expect he will. A security or deposit of money would not significantly contribute to managing these risks.

[99] Taking into account the requirement that the conditions should be no more onerous (in content and number) than necessary for the purposes of bail and reasonable, there should be conditions as to residence, curfew (for less than 12 hours within a 24 hour period, as required by s 5(2B)), participation in an intensive support program, not contacting co-accused or witnesses (except the informant) and not attending Malvern train station. There is no need for a surety.

[100] I will not impose a condition that the applicant not use public transport at all, as requested by the prosecution. He is a young person who is not old enough to drive a motor vehicle and moves about by bus, tram and train. Imposing a condition that he not use public transport at all would impede his freedom of movement to an extent which would not be warranted for any legitimate purpose of bail. There will be a condition that he not attend the Malvern train station where the main victim works.”

In his judgment at [95] Bell J placed significant weight on the fact that the applicant was a child:

“The applicant is a child and his long-term rehabilitation must be a strong consideration. The detention of young people on remand can have deleterious consequences for them and the community which are out of all proportion to the purpose of ensuring appearance at trial and protecting the community. It separates them from their families and the community, disrupts their education and employment, causes them to associate with other young offenders at a vulnerable time in their lives, often (as in the present case) leads to them being held in a police lock-up rather than a youth detention facility, deprives them of access to therapeutic programs and increases the risk of them being given a sentence of incarnation: see Kelly Richards and Lauren Renshaw, ‘Bail and remand for young people in Australia: A national research project’ (Research Paper No 125, Australia Institute for Criminology, 2013). Despite these powerful considerations supporting bail for young people, there will be cases where refusing bail is demanded as a last resort by even stronger countervailing considerations. This is not one of them.”

See also *SG v TA* [2015] VSC 264 at [20] where Croucher J said:

“In my view, it is far preferable, from both the applicant’s and the community’s perspectives, that a boy of the applicant’s age and history be in the community furthering his education and employment prospects than housed in a detention centre with older and probably more criminally-experienced boys and risking the contamination that sometimes occurs in such an environment.”

In *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, in granting bail to a 13 year old boy who had been remanded in custody on charges of criminal damage and assault arising out of events that were said to have occurred at the residential care facility where he was residing, T Forrest J said at [14]:

“Whilst the burden of demonstrating ‘exceptional circumstances’ is, as I have said, a stringent one, the age of the applicant weighs heavily in his favour. **Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1).** In the case of an adult, a combination of circumstances may fall short of constituting exceptional circumstances, while the same combination when considered in the case of a child may achieve a wholly different outcome. The suite of considerations enumerated in s 3B(1) make the evaluation of any determination under this Act, including the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test, a different exercise in the case of a child.”

In *Re LJ* [2019] VSC 765 the 12 year old indigenous applicant was charged with affray, committing an indictable offence while on bail, unlawful assault and possessing a controlled weapon. At the time of the alleged offending he was on bail for three outstanding matters, including serious violent offences. At [20] Lasry J cited the aforementioned dicta of T Forrest J in *Re JO* on the operation of s.3B(1) of the **BA** in determining the existence of exceptional circumstances. At [40] his Honour concluded that exceptional circumstances had been established and that the risk posed by LJ’s release could be reduced to an acceptable level through the imposition of conditions. At [39] his Honour said:

“It seems to me sad and, indeed, almost unthinkable that a 12-year-old Aboriginal child could be held for an imprecise and possibly lengthy period of remand prior to the matters with which is he is charged being dealt with.”

In *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372, in granting bail to a 16 year old girl charged, *inter alia*, with assisting an older offender ultimately charged with culpable driving to avoid apprehension and with theft of a motor vehicle, Priest JA said at [23]:

“It is a serious thing to consign a child to custody or detention pending the resolution of a criminal charge (or charges), particularly where — as here — it is far from a foregone conclusion that the child will receive a sentence involving detention consequentially upon a finding of guilt. **Indeed, in my view, the custody or detention of a child should be avoided unless unavoidable.**”

In *Re Gloury-Hyde* [2018] VSC 393, in granting bail to a 23 year old man, Priest JA said at [35]:

“I consider the right to liberty to be of particular importance when the court is faced with a relatively young man such as the applicant, possessing his physical, psychological and cognitive attributes. Indeed…the nature and extent of the applicant’s ABI, and its consequences for his functioning, which — when taken with other factors such as the availability of treatment — establish exceptional circumstances justifying a grant of bail.”

In *Re ER* [2022] VSC 88, in granting bail to a 17 year old youth, Kaye JA said at [31]:

“It is well accepted that the youth of an applicant may be a significant factor to be taken into account in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established: *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, [14]; *Re JF* [2020] VSC 250, [32]; *Re Johnson* [2021] VSC 800, [63]. Similarly, in determining whether the risk of an applicant reoffending, while on bail, is unacceptable, the young age and attendant circumstances of the applicant are regarded as important considerations: *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [6], [73]; *Re Andrew* [2022] VSC 46, [25].”

In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail to the 17 year old applicant in *Re JB* [2024] VSC 549 – the facts of which are detailed in **subsection 9.4.1.1** – Croucher J said at [36] & [39]:

[36] “Many of the factors in s 3B [of the *Bail Act 1977*] apply to JB’s application. For example, releasing JB on bail would allow the relationship between him and his parents to be strengthened or at least preserved, would promote his education, would minimise the stigma associated with incarceration, and would reduce the criminogenic risks of further incarceration, particularly for a child like JB, who is of Sudanese descent. There is evidence before the Court, which I accept, that JB presents as an impressionable young person, one easily influenced by peers. As a result, in JB’s case, the criminogenic impact of further time in custody is likely to be high. Further, releasing him on bail would give proper weight to the injunction that incarceration is regarded as a last resort for a child…

[39] Finally, if JB is found guilty of, or pleads guilty to, the outstanding charges, it is likely he would not be sentenced to a further period of detention. [the Crown] conceded that, given his age and lack of prior convictions or findings of guilt, a youth supervision order or probation would be a more likely disposition. It follows that refusing bail in the circumstances could very well amount to preventative detention. The law in this State rightly sets its face against preventative detention, and all the more so when the potential detainee is a child.”

See also *HA (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64 and the material set out in **sections 9.2.1 & 9.2.2** above (including the extensive references to s.3B of the **BA**) and **section 9.5.14** below.

## **9.5 Bail – A Miscellany**

### **9.5.1 Whether the principle of ‘parity’ applies to bail proceedings**

In *DPP (Cth) v Stephen Zane Abbott* (1997) 97 A Crim R 19 at 29 {MC2/98} Gillard J, after referring to *Lowe v The Queen* (1984) 154 CLR 606, said of the principle of parity of sentencing:

"The rationale for the principle is based on equal justice so that as between co-offenders there should not be marked disparity which gives rise to a 'justifiable sense of grievance'. But as the High Court has emphasized the principle only applies if 'like can be treated alike'. There must be such a degree of similarity between the co-offenders that they should be treated equally."

His Honour held (at p.29) that the principle could be applied in a qualified way to bail applications:

"The same sense of grievance leading to the appearance of injustice could result from the different treatment of co-accused on applications for bail. To that extent I am prepared to hold that the principle is relevant to the questions of exceptional circumstances as required by ss.4(2)(a) & (aa), the question of the applicant showing cause why his detention in custody is not justified under s.4(4) and also in relation to the inquiry concerning unacceptable risk factors required by s.4(2)(d) of the Act. However, in my view it would indeed be rare for the principle to have any relevant weight in bail applications because the circumstances invariably at all levels of determination are peculiar to the particular applicant."

And later his Honour said:

"In my opinion the principle can apply but it must be established that things are equal as between the co-offenders…[T]he principle can be stated - where other things are equal applicants for bail should receive the same decision; where other things are not equal the bail applications may be dealt with differently. In my opinion a manifestly wrong decision to grant bail could not be used as a basis for the application of the parity principle in another bail application."

In *Browne-Kerr* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 10/08/1993] the applicant allegedly committed offences of trafficking and conspiracy to traffick cannabis whilst on bail for similar drug charges and for deception and theft charges. His wife, daughter and live-in mother-in-law had health problems. The co-accused was also on bail for the similar drug charges and had been granted bail in respect of this matter. He was "in a situation virtually indistinguishable from the applicant". Giving weight, *inter alia*, to the principle of parity, Coldrey J granted bail:

"Ultimately the factors of parity, the applicant's current family situation and the probable ancillary effect of that on his conduct, together with and to a lesser extent, the apprehended delay in the resolution of these matters, cause me to conclude, but I must say not without some hesitation, that sufficient cause has been shown to justify the granting of bail on stringent conditions."

In *Re Michael Barbaro* [2004] VSC 404 at [10] Morris J expressed his in-principle agreement with the concept of "parity" in relation to bail:

"It is a valid principle that where two people are charged with the same offence and their circumstances are the same, what goes for one is relevant as to what goes for the other."

In the case of *CG* [2005] VSC 358R at [50] Kaye J approved the concept of parity in relation to bail for co-accused:

“It is, I consider, important that where two persons who have been accused with the crime have significantly similar circumstances that they should be treated the same in respect of bail, all other matters being equal.”

However in that case Kaye J found that all other matters were not equal as between CG and his co-accused PS.

In *IMO an Application for Bail by Ante Vucak* [2009] VSC 167 the 18 year old applicant was one of 9 young men whose ages ranged from 15 to 20 years and who had been charged with murder, attempted murder and affray. Seven of the co-accused had been granted bail. Kaye J impliedly accepted the concept of parity in relation to bail but refused the applicant bail on the basis that his role was greater than that of the co-accused. At [34]-[45] Kaye J categorized the applicant as having:

* “organised the attendance at the reserve of the co-accused and organised that they be armed with weapons”;
* “on arrival at the reserve…continued his role as the leader of the pack…he either led or was at the front of the charge of young men towards the [victims and] had struck the first blow and did so in circumstances where the deceased man was unarmed”.

In *DPP v Yaakov Shentzer* [2002] VSC 217 the respondent, a co-accused of Det Sgt Rozenes, had been charged with 3 counts of trafficking, 2 counts of conspiracy to traffick and one count of possession of a drug of dependence. He had been released on bail by a magistrate. Beach J allowed an appeal by the DPP pursuant to s.18A of the **BA**. His Honour was of the view that Rozenes had established exceptional circumstances based on evidence that specific threats had been made against him, his wife and family after it became apparent that prisoners had gained access to his personal identification number and had discovered his personal details. Those circumstances did not apply to the co-accused Shentzer. His Honour therefore found that the co-accused's release was not "a factor of significance" so far as Shentzer was concerned. His Honour went on to find that the prosecution case was strong and that the respondent was an unacceptable risk of failing to appear due to his strong family infrastructure overseas.

In *Re Edward Charles Wilson* [2006] VSC 178 Hargrave J was not satisfied that all other matters were equal between the unsuccessful 30 year old applicant and his 22 year coaccused who had been granted bail.

In *Re Joshua Barban & Karl Anthony Barban* [2007] VSC 335 at [38] Hollingworth J took into account the question of parity with a co-offender who had played a substantial role in the offences, had relevant prior convictions but had been granted bail.

In *IMO an Application for Bail by Kelly Michael Gray* [2008] VSC 4 at [15], Bongiorno J said:

“The principle of parity, as such, is one normally associated with sentencing. It is inapt to apply it to the grant of bail unless in doing so all that is intended to be conveyed is that like cases should be treated alike - a fundamental requirement of the rule of law of which the principle of parity in sentencing is but one example. That is what Gillard J meant by his reference to equal treatment in *Abbott* (1997) 97 A Crim R at 29. But the examination of the available facts required in a bail application, ranging from the circumstances of the offence to the personal circumstance of the alleged offender, his associations, employment, family responsibilities and much more (usually on very sparse evidence), make any attempt at realistic comparison with an alleged co-offender somewhat difficult. This is particularly so where only one of those parties is before the court, and that known of the other is, of necessity, limited.”

In *Re Politis* [2019] VSC 780, the 24 year old applicant had been charged with trafficking in not less than a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence and possession of a drug of dependence. A coaccused had been granted bail. The respondent did not oppose bail and submitted that any risk could be made acceptable with appropriate bail conditions. In granting bail Zammit J noted that the principle of parity was of relevance. After citing the aforementioned dicta of Gillard J in *DPP (Cth) v Stephen Zane Abbott* (1997) 97 A Crim R 19 – and noting that it was cited with approval in *Re Wilson* [2006] VSC 178 [18]–[19] (Hargrave J); *Gray v DPP (Vic)* [2008] VSC 4 [15] (Bongiorno J); *Bchinnati v DPP (Vic) (No 2)* [2017] VSC 620 [69]–[70] (Croucher J); *Re Saputra* [2017] VSC 433 [15] (Lasry J) – her Honour said at [23]-[24]:

[23] “In considering the requirement to establish that ‘things are equal’ as between cooffenders, Gillard J expressed the view at [29] that ‘it would indeed be rare for the principle to have any relevant weight in bail applications because the circumstances invariably at all levels of determination are peculiar to the particular applicant’. In *Bchinnati v Director of Public Prosecutions (Vic) (No 2)* [2017] VSC 620 at [70] Croucher J stated of the application of the parity principle to bail applications, ‘[i]n some cases, however, the circumstances of two accused are sufficiently similar that, if bail had been granted to one, it would be wrong to refuse bail to the other, or at least the grant of bail to one would be a relevant consideration on the application of the other’.27 In that case, Croucher J found at [73] that it would be ‘wholly unfair’ to deny bail to the applicant in circumstances where the co-accused was granted bail for what his Honour regarded as ‘related but comparatively far more serious allegations of the same type’.

[24] In *Gant v The Queen* [2016] VSCA 340 at [20] the Court held that if a co-accused with weaker arguments for bail is granted bail, it would be ‘wrong to differentiate’ the outcome for the other coaccused. That is, in circumstances where one co-accused, with weaker arguments for bail, is granted bail, the other co-accused (all other matters being equal) should also be granted bail.”

In *Re O’Shea* [2019] VSC 791 the applicant who had been charged with the murder in 2007 of the deceased wife of a coaccused who had been granted bail by the Supreme Court [see *Re Petrov* [2019] VSC 705]. In granting bail, Zammit J repeated at [31]-[32] the analysis in relation to parity which she had set out in *Re Politis* [2019] VSC 780.

In *Re Noah Zreika* [2020] VSC 648 at [74] Coghlan JA said [emphasis added]:

“I think I have got to the point where it seems to me that we should look at what has happened to [coaccused] Meikhail. There is a significantly stronger case against him than there is against the applicant. Meikhail is on bail. The distinction that exists between them is that the applicant is accused of interfering with a witness and put, essentially on the basis that he did so at the behest of Meikhail. Meikhail is, as yet, to be charged with that offending. **Although principles of parity are not predominant in questions of bail, I think it is very difficult to say that, given the balance of the prevailing circumstances, that this man should be refused bail.**”

In *Re Oldis* [2020] VSC 769 the applicant was one of 4 coaccused charged with s.3A murder and armed robbery in relation to an alleged drug ‘rip-off’. In finding exceptional circumstances and granting bail Tinney J noted that two coaccused had been granted bail by Taylor J and the prosecution cases against those coaccused were stronger than that against the applicant. The respondent had made no assertion of risk against the applicant. On the issue of parity Tinney J said at [41] that:

“The decisions of many judges of this Court make it plain that the principle of parity may be relevant in bail applications. Parity is of course a long-established principle of sentencing. It has been held to be appropriate for a variant of this principle to apply in bail applications.”

His Honour went on at [42]-[52] to refer to a number of cases in which a statement of the principle of parity in bail had been made, including several of the cases cited above and the case of *Bail application by Fadi Haddara* [2014] VSC 284. See also *Re Nagy* [2020] VSC 878 where Taylor J referred with approval at [52] to “the careful analysis” of Tinney J in *Re Oldis* in granting bail to the 4th coaccused.

In *Re Tiba* [2021] VSC 429 Coghlan JA refused bail for the applicant who had been charged with murder but had granted bail to a co-accused: see *Re Rahman* [2021] VSC 402 summarised in **section 9.4.1.1**. At [34] Coghlan JA said [emphasis added]:

“I made it clear that when I released co-accused Rahman on bail that that decision should not be regarded as a basis for bail for any of the other accused on the basis of parity. I regarded the matters important to the grant of bail for Rahman as being largely personal to him. As I said in argument, **I regard the principles of parity as being relevant to bail in only very limited circumstances.** The alleged role and motivation of the applicant is central to the prosecution case and that allegation has some objective support. The role of Rahman, although an active one, is necessarily subservient to that of the applicant. Although there are similarities between a number of the matters the applicant and Rahman put in support of exceptional circumstances, I regard this difference in circumstance as being sufficient to mean that parity reasoning cannot be used in support of the applicant.”

In *Re Tiba (No 2)* [2021] VSC 716 Lasry J found new facts and circumstances based on the undermining of identification evidence against the applicant at the s.198B CPA hearings. This had the effect that the prosecution case against the applicant was no stronger than the case against a coaccused who had been granted bail. In those circumstances Lasry J accepted the submission of counsel for the applicant that “the principle of parity is now a significant matter in establishing exceptional circumstances that justify the grant of bail: *Re Oldis* [2020] VSC 769 (Tinney J); *Re: an application by Fadi Haddara* [2014] VSC 284 (Hollingworth J); *Re Chew* [2021] VSC 265 (Lasry J); *DPP (Commonwealth) v Stephen Zade Abbott* [1997] VSC 45 (Gillard J); *Bchinnati v Director of Public Prosecutions (Vic) (No 2)* [2017] VSC 620 (Croucher J).”

In *Re Price [No.2]* [2022] VSC 441 the 48 year old applicant was charged with murder in circumstances which might be described as a ‘romantic triangle’. In granting bail Lasry J said at [32]:

“I also think it appropriate, bearing in mind the ruling of Coghlan JA in Ms Guillerme's matter in September 2021, that there be a degree of parity between Mr Price and Ms Guillerme in relation to their bail.  In *Bchinnati v DPP (No 2)* [2017] VSC 620, Croucher J observed at [70] that ‘in some cases…the grant of bail to one [co-accused] would be a relevant consideration on the application of the other’. Similarly, Justice Gillard said in *R v Abbott* (1997) A Crim R 19 at [29] that ‘where other things are equal applicants for bail should receive the same decision; where other things are not equal the bail applications may be dealt with differently’.”

In *Re Brown* [2022] VSC 578 the 30 year old applicant was one of three accused charged with murder. In granting bail with a surety of $220,000 and 21 special conditions, Champion J said at [91]-[92]:

“[T]here are three offenders alleged to have been involved the murder of the victim. The applicant’s co-accused have both been granted bail in this Court: *Re Guillerme* [2021] VSC 883; *Re Price (No 2)* [2022] VSC 441. It is clear that parity on the question of exceptional circumstances is a matter that can be taken into account. It is well established that the grant of bail to one co-accused is a relevant consideration on the application of the other: *Bchinnati v DPP (No 2)* [2017] VSC 620, [70]; *R v Abbott* (1997) A Crim R 19 (per Gillard J), [29]. In this case it appears to me to be a significant consideration.

[T]he respondent has pointed to several differences between the circumstances of the present application and those of the co-accused. Having carefully considered the submissions on this point, in my opinion those differences are not so significant as to warrant a different approach in the applicant’s case.”

See also *Re Nhat L* [2021] VSC 446 at [44]-[45] & [54]; *Re Jock* [2021] VSC 561 at [52]; *Re CO & IJ* [2022] VSC 138 at [90]; *Re IM* [2023] VSC 360 at [101]; *Re SQA; Re MG* [2023] VSC 359 at [116]-[121]; *Re EP* [2024] VSC 827 at [43]-[47].

### **9.5.2 Bail undertaking, conduct conditions & electronic monitoring conditions**

**BAIL UNDERTAKING BY ACCUSED**

A bail undertaking must be in writing. There is no authority for a bail undertaking to be given orally. Section 5(1) of the **BA** provides that a grant of bail must require the accused to give an undertaking in writing to surrender into custody at the time and place of the hearing or trial specified in the undertaking and not to depart without leave of the court and, if leave is given, to return at the time specified by the court and again surrender into custody. The prescribed form for a bail undertaking is Form 1 in Schedule 1 of the *Bail Regulations 2022* (see **section 9.2.11** above).

However, as and from 26/04/2021 ss.17A & 17B of the **BA** expanded the concept of a written bail undertaking by setting out a complex procedure by which a bail undertaking may be validly given remotely by means of electronic communication involving an electronic signature by the person signing the undertaking:

* s.17A of the **BA** provides that for the purposes of s.5 of the **BA** the bail decision maker or another authorised person may send copies of a bail undertaking and a s.17 notice to the accused by electronic communication and – after confirming receipt – the accused by return electronic communication signs the bail undertaking by electronic signature;
* s.17B of the **BA** provides that for the purposes of an undertaking under s.16B by a child accused’s parent or some other person the bail decision maker or another authorised person may send copies of the undertaking and a s.17 notice to the undertaking person by electronic communication and the undertaking person by return electronic communication signs the undertaking by electronic signature.

Section 5(1A) provides that an accused who gives a bail undertaking is under a duty to attend court for the hearing or trial specified in the undertaking and surrender into custody on so attending.

Section 5(2) provides that a grant of bail may be subject to–

1. conduct conditions; or

(b) a condition that requires one or more bail guarantees or a deposit of money of a specified amount (whether or not the bail undertaking is also subject to conduct conditions)–

but does not need to be subject to any of these conditions.

Section 28 of the **BA** permits a single bail undertaking to be given in respect of multiple charges.

**UNDERTAKING BY ADULT TO PRODUCE CHILD WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE REQUISITE CAPACITY OR UNDERSTANDING**

Section 16B of the **BA** provides that if, in the opinion of a bail decision maker granting bail to a child, the child does not have the capacity or understanding to give a bail undertaking, the child may be released on bail if the child’s parent or some other person gives an undertaking, in any amount which the bail decision maker thinks fit, to produce the child at the venue of the court to which the hearing of the charge is adjourned or the court to which the child is committed for trial.

The prescribed form for an undertaking by a parent or other person when the child does not have the capacity or understanding to give a bail undertaking is Form 3 in Schedule 1 of the *Bail Regulations 2022* (see **section 9.2.11** above).

**CONDUCT CONDITIONS**

Section 5AAA of the **BA** sets out the following stipulations about **conduct conditions**:

1. A bail decision maker considering the release of an accused on bail must impose any condition that, in the opinion of the bail decision maker, will reduce the likelihood that the accused may–

(aa) commit a Schedule 1 offence or a Schedule 2 offence; or

1. otherwise endanger the safety or welfare of any other person, whether by committing an offence that has that effect or by any other means; or
2. …; or
3. interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or
4. fail to surrender into custody in accordance with **the bail undertaking**.

Before 25/03/2024 the wording of s.5AAA(1)(d) was “fail to surrender into custody in accordance with **the conditions of bail**”. The amendment changing “**the conditions of bail**” to “**the bail undertaking**” is explained in the Explanatory Memorandum by the comment that “the requirement to surrender arises under the bail undertaking itself [see s.5(1) **BA**] and not under the conditions of bail”. However, s.4E(1)(a)(iv) has not been amended and still refers to “fail to surrender into custody in accordance with **the conditions of bail**”: see **section 9.2.4** above.

1. If a bail decision maker imposes one or more conditions, each condition and the number of conditions-
2. must not be more onerous than is required to reduce the likelihood that the accused may do a thing mentioned in subsection (1)(a) to (d); and
3. must be reasonable, having regard to the nature of the alleged offence and the circumstances of the accused; and
4. subject to subsection (3), must be consistent with each condition of each family violence intervention order, family violence safety notice or recognised DVO to which the accused is subject.
5. A bail decision maker may impose a condition that is inconsistent with a condition of a family violence intervention order, family violence safety notice or recognised DVO if the bail decision maker is satisfied that the proposed condition will better protect the safety or welfare of-
6. an alleged victim of the offence with which the accused is charged; or
7. a protected person (within the meaning of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*).

**NOTE**: If it is not possible to comply with both a bail condition and a family violence safety notice, a family violence IVO or a recognised DVO, the safety notice, IVO or DVO prevails to the extent of the inconsistency: FVPA/ss.175AA, 175AB & 175AC.

1. Without limiting ss.4(5) or 5(2), a bail decision maker may impose all or any of the following conditions about the conduct of an accused-
2. reporting to a police station;
3. residing at a particular address;
4. a curfew (not exceeding 12 hours within a 24 hour period) imposing times at which the accused must be at their place of residence;
5. that the accused is not to contact specified persons or classes of persons [e.g. witnesses, alleged victims or co-accused];
6. surrender of the accused’s passport;
7. geographical exclusion zones, being places or areas the accused must not visit or may only visit at specified times [e.g. gaming venues, venues that sell alcohol or points of international departure];
8. attendance and participation in a bail support service (as defined in s.3);
9. that the accused not drive a motor vehicle or carry passengers when driving a motor vehicle;
10. that the accused not consume alcohol or use illegal drugs;
11. that the accused comply with any existing intervention orders;
12. any other condition that the bail decision maker considers appropriate to impose in relation to the conduct of the accused.

It follows from s.5AAA(2) that bail conditions must not be imposed to achieve a collateral purpose such as an injunction: see *R v Flynn & Patten* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC23/94}, 21/10/1994].

Section 17 details the obligation of a bail decision maker to cause the accused and any bail guarantor to be given a written notice setting out the obligations of the accused concerning the conditions of bail and the consequences of the accused’s failure to comply with those conditions.

The following standard conditions are included on the Children's Court Courtlink computer but they do not limit in any way the Court's power to impose relevant conditions in any case:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **REPORT** | Report to a nominated police station on nominated days of the week between nominated hours |
| **RESIDE** | Reside at a specified address |
| **NOTIFY CHANGE** | Notify the informant of any proposed change of address and/or reporting station |
| **ATTEND PROGRAM** | Attend and comply with all requirements of a specified program |
| **OBEY DIRECTIONS** | Obey all lawful directions of a specified person |
| **CURFEW** | * Not leave residence between specified hours except in the company of a specified person * Present at front door during curfew hours at request of police |
| **NON-CONTACT** | Not contact witnesses for the prosecution other than the informant |
| **NON-ASSOCIATION** | Not associate with specified person(s) |
| **INTERVENTION ORDER** | Comply with a specified existing intervention order |
| **ALCOHOL/DRUGS** | * Not consume alcohol * Not use drugs of dependence |
| **PASSPORT** | Surrender valid passport |
| **GEOGRAPHICAL RESTRICTION** | * Not attend points of international departure * Not leave Australia/Victoria * Not attend licensed premises where alcohol is consumed |
| **MOTOR VEHICLE** | Not drive motor vehicle |

In *Re McCann* [2020] VSC 138 – summarized in **subsection 9.4.1.1** above – Lasry J released the 27‑year old applicant on bail with 16 conditions, one of which was that he was “not to be absent from his place of residence unless in the immediate presence of his mother, Ms Mona McCann, and only when:

a) attending scheduled medical, psychological or psychiatric appointments;

b) attending a scheduled appearance at the County or Supreme Court;

c) attending at the Narre Warren police station for the purposes of reporting;

d) attending at Centrelink;

e) attending at a healthcare facility to obtain emergency medical treatment; or

f) traveling directly to, or returning directly from, any of those locations.”

The writer believes that this condition – which was consented to by both the applicant and the respondent – can only be lawful in the face of s.5AAA(4)(c)–

* if it is able to be classified as a ‘home detention’ condition rather than a ‘curfew’ condition; or
* if s.5AAA(4)(c) is interpreted as a prohibition against a bail decision maker imposing a longer than 12 hour curfew in any 24 hour period **without any exceptions attached to the condition**.

In *X5* [Children’s Court of Victoria-Gibson M, 01/04/2020] her Honour conducted a 5-headed bail application by videolink during the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The applicants were 5 youths who had been in a stolen car with an adult. At least one of the people in the car had flu-like symptoms in circumstances where they were clearly not self-isolating but were out and about allegedly committing offences in breach of an existing curfew condition. Her Honour refused bail to 2 of the youths [who will be isolated on remand] and granted bail to the other 3. In granting bail she imposed a condition that each of the 3 self-isolate at home for 14 days. The writer does not consider that her Honour was in breach of s.5AAA(4). She was not imposing a **curfew** in the traditional sense. She was imposing a **public health condition** which she regarded as necessary in order to satisfy the unacceptable risk test in s.4E(1)(a)(i) of the Act: “A bail decision maker must refuse bail for a person accused of any offence if satisfied that there is a risk that the accused would, it released on bail, endanger the safety or welfare of any person.”

In *Re Johnstone (No 2)* [2018] VSC 803 Beach JA ultimately accepted the Crown’s submission that he should include a condition of bail that the applicant comply with all of the conditions of the personal safety intervention order [PSIO] to which he was the respondent. At [26]-[27] his Honour said:

“Plainly, the applicant is by the force of the PSIO itself required to comply with its terms. A breach of the PSIO would constitute a basis for remanding the applicant again into custody. Ordinarily, one would not make an order requiring a person to comply with another order: see *Commonwealth v John Fairfax & Sons Ltd* (1980) 147 CLR 39,49-50; *Duthie v Nixon* (2015) 47 VR 355, 366 [32]-[33]. In the present case, however, I think there is a basis for making it a condition of the applicant’s bail that he comply with all of the conditions of the current PSIO. The condition has the capacity to further bring home to the applicant his need to comply with the PSIO and to stay away from the complainant.”

In *Re Spreckley* [2021] VSC 186 the applicant was on multiple charges of contravening a FVIO and related charges while on bail for other indictable offences. He was also the respondent to four separate intervention orders. In granting bail, Coghlan JA said at [25]-[26]:

“In relation to the form of the conditions, it is not my practice to make it a condition of bail that a person obey intervention orders. It is not appropriate, in my mind, that a condition of bail would simply call on someone to keep the law. I make it clear, however, by listing such orders in other matters, that those orders are in force and that the bind the applicant.

It is not a concession of any kind that I do not include them as a condition, it is just that I do not think that is the way to go about it. The applicant is bound by the four orders, in fact, that are in place at the moment.”

**ELECTRONIC MONITORING CONDITIONS**

**THE PROVISIONS DETAILED BELOW WILL COME INTO OPERATION ON 22/04/2025**

Sections 899-903 of the *Youth Justice Act 2024* **which will come into operation on 22/04/2025** amend the *Bail Act 1977* by adding **ss.17C-17P** to provide for a 2 year trial [see **s.17D(2)(d)** of the **BA**] of electronic monitoring [EM] of children on bail in certain tightly defined circumstances.

Section **17E(1)** of the **BA** defines the “**electronic monitoring conditions**” as conditions of bail which require that the accused–

1. must for 24 hours of each day wear an electronic monitoring device fitted at the direction of the Secretary; and
2. must not, without reasonable excuse, tamper with, damage, disable or remove any electronic monitoring device or equipment used for the electronic monitoring; and
3. must comply with any necessary direction given by the Secretary to the Department of Justice and Community Safety [DJCS] to ensure that the accused is electronically monitored.

It appears clear that the 3 electronic monitoring conditions form a single indivisible package.

The electronic monitoring conditions are only able to be included if the case falls within the definition of an “**applicable decision**” in **ss.17D(1) & 17D(2)** of the **BA** which may be summarised as follows:

A decision whether or not to grant bail to an accused or to vary the conditions of bail is an **applicable decision** if–

1. at the time of making the decision the accused is either aged 14-17 or is aged 18 but was under 18 at the time of the alleged offending; and
2. the bail decision maker is either the Children’s Court sitting at a venue that is in a prescribed region of the State or the Supreme Court; and
3. any additional prescribed criteria are met (there are currently no additional criteria); and
4. the decision is to be made before the second anniversary of the commencement of the EM provisions.

Further the electronic monitoring conditions are only able to be imposed on an accused if the bail decision maker also imposes a residential condition in a **prescribed region** and either or both a curfew condition and a geographical exclusion zone condition. Section **17G** of the **BA** provides that a bail decision maker who is making an **applicable decision** may impose the **electronic monitoring conditions** if–

1. the bail decision maker is to impose, as conduct conditions, either a curfew or a geographical exclusion zone or both; and
2. the bail decision maker is of the opinion that it is appropriate to impose the electronic monitoring conditions in order to monitor compliance with the proposed conduct conditions referred to in paragraph (a); and
3. the bail decision maker is to impose a conduct condition requiring that the accused is to reside at an address that is in a **prescribed region** of the State; and
4. the bail decision maker has received a **suitability report** in respect of the accused and is of the opinion that the accused is suitable to be electronically monitored on bail and adequate resources and equipment are available for this purpose.

Under **s.17F** of the **BA** a **suitability report** is a report prepared by the Secretary DJCS which sets out the author’s opinion (with reasons) as to–

* whether the accused is suitable to be electronically monitored on bail; and
* whether there are adequate resources and equipment available for this purpose.

If a bail decision maker is satisfied of the matters in **s.17G(a) & s.17G(b)**, **s.17H** permits the bail decision maker to adjourn a relevant proceeding and order the Secretary DJCS to cause a **suitability report**–

* to be prepared and filed on or before a day and time specified by the court;
* with copies to be provided, on or before a day and time specified by the court, to each of the parties.

The prescribed regions of the State for the purposes of **ss.17D(2)(b) & 17G(c)** of the **BA** are the municipal districts of the 31 Councils listed in Schedule 2 of the *Bail Regulations 2022* [S.R. No. 116/2022]. This Schedule was inserted by the *Bail Amendment (Electronic Monitoring) Regulations 2025*[S.R. No. 16/2025]made pursuant to **s.17P** of the **BA**. The 31 Councils depicted on the map below comprise all the local government areas in the greater Melbourne region.

A map of different colored regions

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Section **17I** of the **BA** provides that–

* the presence of EM conditions does not prevent that bail from being extended by a bail decision maker who did not impose those conditions; but
* a bail decision maker must not impose EM conditions for the first time when extending bail.

Other relevant provisions in the EM legislative package are:

* **s.17J**: If an accused is subject to EM conditions and the bail is varied so that neither a curfew condition nor a geographical exclusion zone condition remain, the EM conditions are also revoked.
* **s.17K**: An accused ceasing to be of eligible age does not affect existing EM conditions.
* **s.17L**: Removal of EM devices and equipment if EM conditions cease.
* **s.17M**: Temporary removal of EM device if person arrested.
* **s.17N**: Confidentiality of personal information obtained as a result of use of EM equipment.

The case of *Secretary to the Department of Justice and Community Safety v OKH (No 3)* [2024] VSC 774 involved a review and variation of a supervision order to which a 40 year old offender was subject under the *Serious Offenders Act 2018* (Vic). While determining that an electronic monitoring condition should remain and constituted “the minimum interference with OKH’s liberty, privacy or freedom of movement that is necessary in the circumstances”, Elliott J also noted at [46] that – as stated by Gageler CJ, Gordon, Gleeson & Jagot JJ in *YBFZ v Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs* (2024) 419 ALR 457, 477-478 [57]-[62] – “the detriment of being required to wear an electronic monitoring device is significant, both from physical and psychological perspectives”.

### **9.5.3 Bail guarantees/guarantors (formerly known as sureties) & deposits of money**

A requirement for an applicant for bail to provide a bail guarantee or a deposit of money is a condition of bail. This is clear from s.5(2)(b) which provides that a grant of bail may be – but does not need to be – subject to a condition that requires–

* one or more bail guarantees; or
* a deposit of money of a specified amount–

whether or not the bail undertaking is also subject to conduct conditions.

“**Bail guarantee**” is defined in s.3 **BA** as “an undertaking, given by one or more persons, to pay a specified amount if there is–

1. a failure to comply with a bail undertaking or an undertaking given under s.16B (as the case requires); or
2. a failure to comply with a condition of the grant of bail in respect of which the undertaking referred to in paragraph (a) was given”.

By contrast, a “**deposit of money**” referred to in s.5(2)(b) **BA** is a specified amount of money to be provided by the accused as a security for the accused’s attendance at court in accordance with the bail undertaking: cf. s.32 **BA**.

Section 5AAB of the **BA** sets out the following stipulations about bail guarantees and deposits of money:

1. If a bail decision maker is considering, in accordance with s.5(2)(b), imposing a condition that requires a deposit of money of a specified amount, the bail decision maker must have regard to the means of the accused in determining–
2. whether to impose the condition; and
3. the amount of money to be deposited.
4. If a bail decision maker is satisfied under subsection (1) that the accused does not have sufficient means to satisfy a condition requiring a deposit of money of a specified amount, the bail decision maker must consider whether any other condition would reduce the likelihood that the accused may do a thing mentioned in s.5AAA(1)(a) to (d).
5. If a bail decision maker is considering imposing a condition that requires a bail guarantee, the bail decision maker must have regard to the means of a proposed bail guarantor in determining–
6. whether to impose the condition; and
7. the amount of the bail guarantee.
8. If a bail decision maker is satisfied under subsection (3) that the accused is unable to provide a bail guarantor with sufficient means, the bail decision maker must consider whether any other condition would reduce the likelihood that the accused may do a thing mentioned in s.5AAA(1)(a) to (d).

Provisions relating to bail guarantors are contained in s.9 of the **BA** and include the following:

* S.9(1): A bail guarantor must be 18 years or older who is not under any disability in law and is worth not less than the amount of the bail in real or personal property or both.
* S.9(2) sets out 3 specific matters to which regard may be had in considering the suitability of a proposed bail guarantor.
* S.9(2A) provides that if objection to a proposed bail guarantor is raised, the suitability of the proposed bail guarantor is to be determined by a magistrate or judge.
* S.9(3) imposes obligations on the person admitting an accused to bail with a bail guarantee, including a requirement in s.9(3)(c) that each proposed bail guarantor sign the bail undertaking.

In *Renate Mokbel v DPP (Vic) and DPP (Cth)* [2006] VSC 487 at [35] Gillard J said:

“The surety undertakes to ensure that the accused will appear at his trial. That is the prime obligation. In *2 Hawkins Pleas of the Crown, Chapter 15, s.3*, the learned author, writing in 1824, stated that the purpose of granting bail was not to set the accused free, but to release him from the custody of the law and to entrust him to the custody of his sureties, who were bound to produce him to answer on his trial at a specified time and place.”

Nowadays, in fact, requiring a child to pay a monetary deposit to secure his/her release on bail is extremely rare. Requiring a child to find one or more sureties to secure his/her release on bail is also very rare. This is on all fours with ss.5AAB(1) & 5AAB(3) which provide that a bail decision maker must have regard to the means of the proposed money provider in deciding whether to order a deposit or bail guarantee in any and what amount.

In *Re Wilkinson* [1983] 2 VR 250 at 254-255 Crockett J discussed the importance of a bail guarantor being a “genuine” bail guaranor. See also *Re Condon* [1973] VR 427 at 431. Section 31 creates an offence of indemnifying a bail guarantor. In *Renate Mokbel v DPP (Vic) and DPP (Cth)* [2006] VSC 487 at [38] Gillard J said:

“The importance of the undertaking given by a surety cannot be overstated. The Court, once it grants bail, is not in a position to supervise obedience to the order and conditions. It relies upon a surety to perform that task. In that sense, the surety acts as both ‘the eyes and ears’ of the Court. The surety undertakes a duty to ensure that the principal, that is, the accused, honours his undertaking to the Court to appear at trial and to attend each day of the trial. The surety must be independent and undertake a real obligation. This means that the surety must put his or her money at risk. Hence, by reason of s 31 of the Bail Act, it is a criminal offence for a person to indemnify a surety, and an agreement by which an accused undertakes to indemnify a surety constitutes a conspiracy to effect a public mischief. See *The King v Porter* [1910] 1 KB 369. It is vital that a surety understands the obligation of his or her undertaking, and the obligation requires the surety to ensure that the accused honours his or her undertaking to attend the trial.

At [43] Gillard J spoke of the amount of the bail guarantee exerting a pressure on the accused to honour the bail undertaking and cited with approval dicta of Lord Widgery CJ in *R v Southhampton Justices; Ex parte Corker* (1976) 120 SJ 214:

“The real pull of bail, the real effective force that it exerts, is that it may cause the offender to attend his trial rather than subject his nearest and dearest who has gone surety for him to undue pain and discomfort.”

Section 21 of the **BA** abolishes the common law right of a bail guarantor to apprehend the principal and to bring him or her before a bail justice or a court.

Section 23 empowers a bail guarantor to apply to the court to which the accused would be required to surrender under the conditions of bail to discharge the applicant from liability with respect to the bail undertaking.

### **9.5.4 Extension of bail**

A court has a wide power to extend bail: see s.16 of the **BA**.

### **9.5.5 Reasons and sufficiency thereof**

A court which grants bail for a person in circumstances where, under s.4AA, the step 1 – exceptional circumstances test or the step 1 – compelling reason test applies must include in the order granting bail a statement of reasons for making the order: ss.12A(1) & (2) of the **BA**. A failure to include such reasons has been held to render the order a nullity: see *DPP v Parker* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC25/94}, 19/08/1994] per Mandie J at p.2; *DPP v Sehevella* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 12/01/1997] per Beach J; *DPP (Commonwealth)* v *Stephen Zane Abbott* (1997) 97 A Crim R 19 at 24 {MC2/98} per Gillard J, not following a contrary decision of Hampel J in *DPP v Spiridon* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC60/88}, 07/09/1988]. By contrast, in *R v The Director-General of Corrections, ex parte Allen* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC1/87}, 11/11/1986] Tadgell J held that a remand warrant was not invalid because it failed to specify a ground for refusal of bail in circumstances where no application for bail had been made.

A similar obligation is imposed by s.12A(3) **BA** on a bail decision maker who is not a court to record and transmit a statement of reasons in Form 5 as required by reg.9 of Schedule 1 of the *Bail Regulations 2022*.

Reasons need not be elaborate. In *Nguyen v Magistrates' Court of Victoria* [Supreme Court of Victoria, {MC31/93}, 13/12/1993] Beach J held that a magistrate who had refused bail to an accused who had 4 priors for failing to answer bail had given sufficient reasons when he stated that the accused was "an unacceptable risk". In *DPP v Harika* [2002] VSC 237 the magistrate had included in the order the following: "Reasons for granting Bail: AGE, SUPPORTS, STRUCTURE, HAS SHOWN CAUSE". Gillard J somewhat reluctantly held that the statement of reasons did comply with the obligation set out in what was then s.4(4) of the Act:

"[30] Taken in isolation, the reasons are difficult to comprehend. Whilst one commends any judicial officer for being brief and to the point, the statement must be comprehensible to the reasonable reader and satisfy the description of "reasons". The object of the requirement is to ensure that judicial officers turn their minds to the issues and determine the matter in accordance with the law. The obligation to state reasons focuses the mind on the issues. In order to determine whether the judicial officer has done so, one turns to the reasons.

[31] …[T]o state that the applicant 'has shown cause' is a conclusion and is not a statement of reasons.

[32] On their face, the Magistrate has determined that by reason of the respondent's age, the fact that there is a structure in place and that he has the necessary support of others, cause is established as to why his detention in custody is not justified.

[33] The reasons are not to be considered in isolation. By reference to the transcript of the proceedings before the Magistrate and the documentary material adduced in evidence, this Court can determine what the reasons were for concluding that the applicant had shown cause…

[37] What the Magistrate recorded in the order, as a statement of reasons for making the order, was, in my opinion, the barest minimum. Judicial officers should explain in more detail the reasoning which led to the order.

[38] I am satisfied, when the Magistrate's reasons are considered in the light of the transcript of the two hearings before her, that the statement of reasons for making the order does comply with the obligation in s.4(4) of the Act."

Where a person is refused bail by a court, the judicial officer must certify on the remand warrant a statement of the refusal and of the grounds for the refusal: s.12(4)(b) of the **BA**.

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### **9.5.6 Further application for bail – New facts or circumstances**

Under s.18(1) of the **BA** an accused who has been refused bail and is in custody pending the hearing or trial of a charge may make a further application for bail.

Under s.18(2) a person whose bail has been revoked under s.18AE or s.24(3) may make a further application for bail. See also s.24(5).

Section 18(3) provides that, subject to s.144(2)(c) of the *Criminal Procedure Act 2009*, an application under s.18(1) or s.18(2) is to be made-

(a) in the case of a person charged with treason or murder, to the Supreme Court;

(b) in any other case, to the court to which the person is remanded to appear.

This provision – which came into operation on 01/01/2011 – nullifies the decision of Cummins J in *Scher & Premru v Popovic, Dever & Wilson* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 12/01/1990].

However, it is clear from s.18AH(1) that nothing in s.18 – or for that matter in ss.18AA, 18AC or AE – derogates from any other right of application or appeal to the Supreme Court or County Court: cf. the dicta of Gillard J in *Bail Application by Michael Paterson* [2006] VSC 268 at [47]-[49].

Section 18AA(1) of the **BA** provides that a court must not hear an application under s.18 unless–

(aa) the application is the first or second instance of the applicant applying to a court for bail (whether under s.18 or otherwise) since being taken into custody; or

(a) the applicant satisfies the court that new facts or circumstances have arisen since the refusal or revocation of bail; or

(b) the applicant was not represented by a legal practitioner when bail was refused or revoked; or

(c) the order refusing or revoking bail was made by a bail justice.

In granting bail in *Re Zayneh (No 2)* [2024] VSC 374 Elliott J said at [49]:

“The expression ‘new facts or circumstances’ in section 18AA(1)(a) of the Bail Act encompasses a broad range of matters. That said, not every fact or circumstance, no matter how trivial, will satisfy the court that the statutory criteria has been met. The provision is not to be enlivened based on some minor detail so as to enable it to be relied upon as a means of reagitating an earlier adverse determination. However, if new factors emerge which may favour the granting of bail then, ordinarily, a court will be satisfied the threshold has been met. See *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* [2009] VSC 27, [26]‑[31] and the cases there cited.”

Under s.18AB an application under s.18 must be conducted as a fresh hearing and determined in accordance with s.4. Section 18(4) requires a further application for bail to be heard by the same judicial officer if reasonably practical.

Under s.18AK an accused must give notice of a further application for bail under s.18(1) to the informant and to the DPP/prosecutor at least 3 days before the hearing unless the Court is satisfied that the circumstances justify the application being heard sooner or all the parties agree.

### **9.5.6.1 SOME CASES IN WHICH NEW FACTS OR CIRCUMSTANCES WERE DISCUSSED**

*Daniel James Keogh*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Lush J, unreported, 07/04/1982]

The applicant was charged with: (1) possession & trafficking of drug and possession of firearm and (2) possession & trafficking of drug and self-administration of amphetamine. Bail had previously been refused. Lush J accepted that "the discovery in more precise terms of the likely effect of the delays [in analysing the substances by FSL] which are referred to in general terms [in the previous application for bail], if significant, should be treated as coming within the expression 'new facts or circumstances have arisen'". His Honour ultimately determined that the delays constituted 'exceptional circumstances' and released the applicant on bail, saying that "the delays [by FSL] should not be the basis for prolonged incarceration of people who have not been tried".

*Robin Vincent Holt*

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Marks J, unreported, 01/06/1984]

The accused and a co-accused were charged with attempted armed robbery and shooting of 2 brothers. The accused had been refused bail on 3 prior occasions. On each occasion he had been legally represented. At the end of the first day of the committal, the Magistrate held that the evidence of the attempted armed robbery was weak and that the witness' evidence constituted a 'new fact or circumstance'. His Honour allowed the subsequent appeal, holding that it did not and the Magistrate would have had to have heard all of the evidence and submissions prior to determining whether 'new facts or circumstances' had arisen.

*Dylan Peter Edwards*

(1988) 35 A Crim R 465

After committal, the applicant applied for bail pending trial, having been charged with having in his possession 1.13 tonnes of cannabis resin reasonably suspected of having been imported into Australia contrary to s.233B(ca) of the *Customs Act 1901* (Cth). In granting bail, the Court held-

1. The mere fact of a committal having taken place is not of itself sufficient to constitute new facts or circumstances. The question is whether there are new considerations which were not before the court on the occasion of the previous application when bail was refused.
2. The question is whether, now that the extent of the prosecution case is better known, it can be said that there has been a material change in the circumstances or facts which have been discovered which, if discovered in time, would have entitled the applicant to an order in his favour.
3. A persuasive and satisfying case is required, and not one in which the differences disclosed by the additional material go only to matters of mere detail or to considerations which, although not previously raised, would not have been likely to alter the balance to one favouring the granting of bail.
4. There was adequate new material and, weighing the nature and seriousness of the offences with other facts, including the evidence against the accused, his character and antecedents, together with conditions of bail which could be ordered, the risk of his failing to appear at trial was not unacceptable.

Although this is a Queensland case, the relevant legislation limits the right of an accused to make successive applications for bail in the absence of new facts or circumstances.

*Antonios Mokbel* {See also paragraph 9.4.4.1 above}

[Supreme Court of Victoria, Kellam J]

[2002] VSC 127 - 26/04/2002

A magistrate had granted bail on being satisfied that exceptional circumstances existed. Cummins J, on DPP & CDPP appeals pursuant to s.18A of the *Bail Act 1977*, had found that the magistrate had erred and had revoked bail: [2001] VSC 403. In his first bail application before Kellam J the applicant relied, *inter alia*, on delay, deterioration of his financial situation and weakening of Crown case as a consequence of an informer and 2 drug squad officers no longer being Crown witnesses. His Honour was not persuaded that any new facts or circumstances were established as relevant to whether or not the issue of a grant of bail should be revisited. His Honour held at [39]-[40]:

"The applicant must satisfy the Court that new facts or circumstances have arisen since the making of the previous order before the Court may proceed to hear the application. In my view the new facts or circumstances must be of such a nature that they are relevant to bail and justify a conclusion by the Court that reconsideration of the refusal of bail is required. Clearly not every new fact or change of circumstance will fall into this category."

(No.2) [2002] VSC 312 - 09/08/2002

At Mokbel's application for bail decided on 26/04/2002, the prosecution had expressed confidence that the State prosecution would proceed to committal on 15/07/2002. That confidence proved to be unfounded. It was conceded by the prosecution that new circumstances had arisen since the making of the previous order.

See also *Re Rahman* [2021] VSC 402 at [9]-[12] per Coghlan JA; *Re Tiba (No 2)* [2021] VSC 716; *DPP v Roberts (Ruling No 2)* [2021] VSC 559 at [34]-[44].

### **9.5.7 Application to vary bail**

Under s.18AC(1) of the **BA** a person who has been granted bail, whether or not the person is in custody, may apply for variation of the amount of bail or the conditions of bail.

Under s.18AC(2) the informant or the DPP may apply for–

(a) variation of the amount of bail or the conditions of bail; or

(b) the imposition of conditions in respect of bail which has been granted unconditionally.

Under 18AC(3) an application under s.18AC(1) or s.18AC(2) is to be made–

(a) in the case of a person charged with treason or murder, to the Supreme Court;

(b) in any other case, to the court to which the person is remanded to surrender under the bail application.

Under s.18AC(4) a person may apply for variation of the amount of bail or the conditions of bail if–

(a) the person has been granted bail by a bail justice or the Magistrates’ Court; and

(b) within 24 hours after the grant of bail, the person is unable to meet the conditions of bail.

Such application is to be made to the bail justice who granted the bail or to the Magistrates’ Court.

Section 18AD empowers the court or bail justice to vary the amount of bail or the conditions of bail if it appears to the bail decision maker that it is reasonable to do so having regard to the surrounding circumstances.

Section 18AI provides that if an accused who has been admitted to bail with one or more bail guarantees applies for a variation of the amount or conditions of bail, the accused must give written notice of the application to each bail guarantor a reasonable time before the hearing of the application. Under s.18AJ(1) a bail guarantor is entitled to attend and give evidence at the hearing of an application for variation of bail.

Under s.18AK an accused must give notice of an application to vary conditions of bail under s.18AC to the informant and to the DPP/prosecutor at least 3 days before the hearing unless the Court is satisfied that the circumstances justify the application being heard sooner or all the parties agree.

In refusing an application to vary bail in *Dixon v DPP* [2009] VSC 224 Bongiorno J held at [8] that although the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is undoubted so far as questions of bail are concerned, it would require a reason of considerable gravity not only to alter bail conditions which have already been endorsed at least once by a State Magistrate but to alter those conditions when an order of a Federal Magistrate having jurisdiction under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) governs the applicant’s contact with his children anyway.

In *Re Monica Smit* [2021] VSC 642 the 33 year old applicant lives with her parents and her partner, has no issues with illegal substance abuse, has no prior convictions and has never been arrested or on bail before. She is the founder, leader and public face of an activist group RDA which challenged the legitimacy of the Victorian government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On various dates in August 2021 she engaged in conduct which resulted in 5 charges being laid against her. Three charges were of breaching s.203(1) of the *Public Health Act* by leaving her home for a non-prescribed purpose. The other two charges were of inciting others to breach s.203(1) of the *Public Health Act*. She had been granted bail in the Magistrates’ Court but rejected the conduct conditions and refused to sign the bail undertaking. On an application to vary bail, heard after Ms Smit had been in custody for 22 days, Hollingworth J held that some existing conditions were onerous or unreasonable and varied the bail conditions. Later that day Ms Smit signed her bail undertaking and was released.

In *Saises v DPP (Cth)* [2025] VSC 12 the applicant, a cruise ship cabin steward who was a citizen of the Philippines, had been committed for trial on charges of committing indecent acts against a 61 year old passenger and had been released on bail pending trial in the County Court. He sought a variation of bail to enable him to return home to the Philippines for a short period before trial to visit his wife who was suffering from breast cancer. His application to vary bail had been refused by the County Court. Champion J dismissed his appeal, noting that–

* there was no guarantee that an extradition process would be engaged in;
* there was no confirmed reporting procedure when overseas;
* there was no oncological opinion with respect to the seriousness of the applicant’s wife’s diagnosis;
* accordingly there was an unacceptable risk that the applicant would not return to Australia to stand trial.

### **9.5.8 Application to revoke bail**

Under s.18AE(1) of the **BA** the informant or the DPP may apply for revocation of bail granted to a person. Section 18AE(1A) provides that without limiting s.18AE(1), an application to revoke bail may be made because the applicant believes on reasonable grounds that the person–

* has committed or is likely to commit an offence since bail was granted; or
* has breached a bail condition or is likely to breach a bail condition or the bail undertaking.

Under s.18AE(2) an application under s.18AE(1) is to be made–

(a) in the case of a person charged with treason or murder, to the Supreme Court;

(b) in any other case, to the court to which the person is required to surrender under the bail undertaking.

Under s.18AF, on an application under s.18AE, the court may either revoke bail or dismiss the application. It is noteworthy that the court does not have power to vary bail as an alternative.

In *Re Hammoud (application for bail revocation)* [2022] VSC 613 on 06/10/2022 Tinney J revoked bail which had been granted by Coghlan JA in August 2021 on charges including murder and attempted armed robbery: see [2021] VSC 496. On 01/06/2022 the prosecution decided not to proceed with the charge of murder and the respondent then faced charges of attempted armed robbery and aggravated burglary only. The trial was listed to commence on 15/05/2023. In revoking bail his Honour said:

[62] “In respect of the law which applied to the revocation application…s 18AF does not elaborate on the requirements or considerations when considering a revocation application. The discretion, as noted by Priest JA, must be exercised by reference to the guiding principles in s 1B of the Act {see *Re Gloury-Hyde* (No 2) [2018] VSC 520, [13]}, but there is no apparent requirement for a judge considering a revocation application to return to the exceptional circumstances or unacceptable risk considerations which would have applied at the time of the original application, and consider those afresh. That is not to say that those matters may not be relevant in the disposition of the application. I note, for instance, that in *Re KA (No 2)* [2022] VSC 363, Beach JA, in deciding to accede to an application for revocation of bail where there had been further offending by the respondent during the period of the bail, noted his satisfaction that the applicant then was an unacceptable risk of committing further offences, and that no conditions he could impose would reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

[63] I think that what is required of a bail decision maker hearing a revocation application is to determine, in the circumstances of the application, and having regard to the guiding principles which are at the heart of the Act, whether or not it is appropriate for bail to be revoked. Often, the particular considerations previously considered in respect of one or more of the steps in the original application will be of great significance. Other times, they may not be. Undoubtedly, evidence showing that a respondent had repeatedly and deliberately breached conditions of bail over a substantial period of time would be an important matter for the Court to consider when contemplating whether bail should be revoked.

[64] Having made these observations as to the proper test, I can indicate that I saw no need to reach a definitive view as to the correct test in the circumstances of this application. It seemed to me that no matter what the test was, it was necessary and appropriate that bail be revoked in this case. For an extended period of time, the respondent showed a complete lack of respect for the conditions of bail, and an unwillingness to comply with them even when on notice that the prosecution were contemplating revocation. In my view, nothing I could do would be sufficient to change his attitude. That left the Court in the position of considering a person who was released on bail on strict conditions who simply refused to abide by them. That would mean that the structure and control intended by Coghlan JA to be in place in and over the life of the respondent for the protection of the community was lacking for an extended period, and would likely continue to be lacking in future should he remain on bail.

[65] In those circumstances, were I required to ask myself whether the respondent would now pose an unacceptable risk of any of the eventualities set out in s 4E, the answer would be yes. There would be an unacceptable risk of the respondent endangering the safety or welfare of any person, or committing an offence while on bail. The risk of reoffending would include but not be limited to offences against the Act.

[66] In the circumstances of this case, and paying full regard to the guiding principles of the Act, I was satisfied that it would be appropriate and necessary for me to revoke the grant of bail previously made by Coghlan JA in this case.”

The subject of the case of *Re WD (No 3)* [2024] VSC 14 was a 12 year old child charged with murder on 16/11/2023. After first coming to the attention of DFFH in 2011, WD has been in the Secretary’s care for a significant period, initially on interim accommodation orders, then on a custody to Secretary made in October 2012 and more recently on a care by Secretary order made in 2019 and since extended. The difficulties that WD has faced over the course of her short life have involved significant trauma, abuse and disruption. She has been described as an “exceptionally vulnerable young person” with “extremely complex protection and care needs” and has been diagnosed with several mental health and cognitive functioning disorders. It is common ground that WD’s intellectual capacity has been estimated as equivalent to that of a 6-year-old with respect to both her maturity and her level of comprehension.

WD was granted bail by Elliott J on 17/11/2023 on an undertaking by the Secretary pursuant to s.16B *Bail Act 1977* for and on WD’s behalf and on certain conditions, including that WD reside at a Secure Location: see *Re WD (No 1)* [2023] VSC 780. A bail monitoring hearing was held on 06/12/2023. It resulted in the extension of WD’s bail on a further undertaking by the Secretary and on largely similar conditions.

Elliott J subsequently heard two further applications–

* an application by the DPP filed on 14/12/2023 for revocation of bail which was supported by the Secretary of DFFH; and
* an originating motion filed by the Secretary on 19/12/2003 seeking two specified orders in the *parens patriae* jurisdiction of the Supreme Court if the DPP’s revocation application was unsuccessful.

Given the similar issues and considerations raised by both applications, it was agreed at the commencement of the hearing on 19/12/2023 that both applications would be determined concurrently and that evidence in each proceeding would be evidence in the other.

On 19/12/2023 Elliott J dismissed the revocation application and made seven orders in the *parens patriae* jurisdiction (as discussed in **section 5.33.1**). In relation to the revocation application his Honour said at [65]-[68] & [98]-[101]:

[65] “Either the Director or an informant may apply to the court for revocation of bail granted to a person: s.18AE. On such an application, the court may either revoke bail or dismiss the application: s.18AF. Beyond this, the *Bail Act* does not provide any guidance on how the discretionary power to revoke bail is to be exercised. However, the power to revoke bail must be exercised in accordance with the guiding principles set out in section 1B of the *Bail Act: Re Dukic* [2018] VSC 664, [18] (Champion J); *Re Gloury-Hyde (No 2)* [2018] VSC 520, [13] (Priest JA). Relevantly, this includes the importance of maximising the safety of the community, the presumption of innocence and the right to liberty: s.1B(1)(a),(b).

[66] However, one factor that may logically be of relevance to this assessment is whether a person previously granted bail now presents an unacceptable risk of the kind referred to in section 4E(1) of the *Bail Act*, namely an unacceptable risk of endangering the safety or welfare of any person; committing an offence while on bail; interfering with a witness or otherwise obstructing the course of justice in any matter; or failing to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of their bail. If the court were so satisfied, it might be appropriate to revoke a grant of bail previously made, notwithstanding that the exceptional circumstances which justified the grant of bail are still in existence and that the conditions ordered upon the grant of bail are being met.

[67] In any assessment of unacceptable risk, the court is required to take into account the surrounding circumstances: ss.3AAA(1), 4E(3)(a). The question of unacceptable risk is one that must be relative to all the circumstances, particularly the exceptional circumstances which justified a grant of bail. Where the relevant circumstances are particularly compelling, a risk which might in different circumstances be regarded as unacceptable may properly be viewed as acceptable: *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [6] (Maxwell P and Kaye JA), citing *Mokbel v Director of Public Prosecutions (No 3)* (2002) 133 A Crim R 141, 143 [10] (Kellam J) and *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 728 [41] (Maxwell P, Vincent and Kellam JJA). In this regard, the following observations made by the Court of Appeal in *HA v The Queen* at [73] are of particular relevance to the present circumstances:

‘As is true of almost every grant of bail, there will remain a degree of risk. Nevertheless, in our respectful view, it was not reasonably open to his Honour to conclude that the risk was unacceptable in the circumstances of this case. Given the powerful considerations to which we have referred — the appellant’s *youth and childlike cognitive capacity*, his *vulnerability in custody* and *the probability that he will not receive a custodial sentence* — what might in other circumstances have been viewed as unacceptable risk had properly to be viewed as acceptable.’ (Emphasis added)

[68] Further, under section 3B(1) of the *Bail Act*, the court must take into account certain considerations in making a determination under the Act in relation to a child, including a decision to revoke bail, namely:

* + - 1. the need to consider all other options before remanding the child in custody; and
      2. the need to strengthen and preserve the relationship between the child and the child’s family, guardians or carers; and
      3. the desirability of allowing the living arrangements of the child to continue without interruption or disturbance; and
      4. the desirability of allowing the education, training or employment of the child to continue without interruption or disturbance; and
      5. the need to minimise the stigma to the child resulting from being remanded in custody; and
      6. the likely sentence should the child be found guilty of the offence charged; and
      7. the need to ensure that the conditions of bail are no more onerous than are necessary and do not constitute unfair management of the child.

Further, bail must not be refused to a child on the sole ground that the child does not have any, or any adequate, accommodation: s.3B(3).”

…

[98] “Ultimately, although there is some weight in each of the concerns raised about WD’s ongoing placement at the Secure Location, I do not consider the risk associated with this to be at an unacceptable level. Further, it is clear that maintaining this arrangement for the time being is in WD’s best interests when compared to the only available alternative – namely, remanding WD to the Youth Justice Centre.

[99] In addition to each of the considerations outlined above, in reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the criteria listed in section 3B(1) of the *Bail Act*. Each of these criteria clearly weighs in favour of WD’s continued placement at the Secure Location. Most relevantly, this course of action will ensure that remand in custody remains a measure of last resort {s.3B(1)(a)}, it will preserve the relationship between WD and those responsible for her care {s.3B(1)(b)}, it will allow her current living arrangements to continue without interruption or disturbance {s.3B(1)(c)}, it will allow for her continued education without any interruption {s.3B(1)(d)}, and it will minimise the risk of any stigma that WD may face {s.3B(1)(e)}.

[100] Another relevant matter is that WD’s counsel has raised the fact that the capacity of WD to commit the offence with which she has been charged will be directly in issue. Without expressing any view on the matter (as any evidence to be relied upon is not before the court), there must be a realistic prospect that the prosecution will not be able to establish that a 12-year-old girl with, amongst other things, serious cognitive functioning and intellectual maturity issues had the mental capacity to commit the offence of murder: see *Director of Public Prosecutions v PM* [2023] VSC 560, [10], [59]-[100] (Incerti J).

[101] Moreover, it is critical that extending WD’s placement at the Secure Location for the time being would only be a temporary arrangement. The evidence of the Statewide Principal Practitioner and the Principal Practitioner was that a longer-term solution for WD’s care is available in the form of the Bespoke Facility, and planning is underway for its preparation. The Bespoke Facility represents a means by which WD might be accommodated on an ongoing basis, and in a manner where some continuity and stability in terms of her care arrangements may be ensured. WD will also be housed independently at the Bespoke Facility, meaning she can receive 1-to-1 care and there will be no risk of unwanted interactions with other young persons causing her to become distressed or dysregulated. In addition, the evidence shows that careful planning is going into the modifications and works to be done to the Bespoke Facility, to ensure that any risk to WD and those providing her care will be minimised to the greatest extent reasonably possible and that WD’s particular needs and vulnerabilities will be accommodated.”

In *Re Farah* [2024] VSC 196 the 21 year old applicant had been on bail on charges of murder and kidnapping in which he was one of 8 co-accused. He was subsequently remanded on charges of possessing an imitation firearm, possessing a drug of dependence, committing an indictable offence whilst on bail, contravening a conduct condition of bail and stating a false name. There were 3 applications before Champion J:

1. an application to vary bail filed by the informant on the original charges prior to Mr Farah’s remand;
2. an application to revoke bail filed by the informant on the original charges subsequent to Mr Farah’s remand; and
3. an application by Mr Farah for bail on the subsequent charges.

His Honour heard the 3 applications together, saying at [3]-[4]:

[3] “In *Re Dukic* [2018] VSC 664 the court considered an application for bail and an application to revoke bail simultaneously, in circumstances where the Director had filed the latter application in light of Mr Dukic’s remand on new charges. The court found at [6] that consideration of both applications together ‘was in the public interest to save time and unnecessary expense’. In that case, the court also noted at [50] that the arguments of both parties were largely common to both applications before the Court’.

[4] Consistent with the approach taken in the decision cited above, the court has heard the three applications together at the hearing on 12 March 2024, given the significant overlap of content relevant to the respective applications.”

Ultimately his Honour refused bail, holding at [74] & [76]-[77]:

[74] “Whilst exceptional circumstances were made out when Mr Farah initially applied for bail, given the change in circumstance represented by these new allegations, I am not satisfied the test is met.”

[76] “As with my decision on the revocation application, I consider the accused poses an unacceptable risk if bailed, predominantly of endangering the safety or welfare of people, or committing offences whilst on bail.

[77] In all the circumstances, I do not consider that these risks could be ameliorated to an acceptable degree by the imposition of further bail conditions. Whilst the support of Mr Farah’s family is admirable and well-intended, the court has concerns that they would be able to supervise him to the degree necessary to assuage the risk posed. For these reasons, and in light of all the surrounding circumstances, I consider Mr Farah does pose an unacceptable risk and bail must be refused.”

At [81] his Honour concluded:

“Given what I have said above, and with reference to the same factors, I also satisfied that bail should be revoked in relation to the [original] matter.”

A conflict of authority has arisen as to whether or not the Supreme Court has power in a judicial monitoring hearing to revoke a bail order which requires the accused to surrender himself or herself to another Court.

In *Re ZT* (unreported, SCV, 10 May 2022) Lasry J held that the Supreme Court did not have power to revoke bail in such circumstances, stating:

“Firstly, it is the fact that a regime of judicial monitoring as conducted in this court, regularly by me and by other judges, is effectively a fiction.

It is not referred or mandated by anything that is contained in the *Bail Act 1977*, judges impose conditions relating to judicial monitoring because it is a means by which those judges conclude that an applicant who might otherwise have difficulties being granted bail, can be released and to be released effectively under some form of judicial supervision. I think that is an appropriate condition to impose and I think judicial monitoring and judicial supervision has a legitimate and useful role to play in endeavouring to prevent people like this applicant from committing further offences once released on bail. But the fact is it is a fiction, it is not a product of any provision of the *Bail Act*.

To the extent that anyone pays attention to anything I may say about that, I indicate now that I would strongly urge the Victorian Government to introduce amendments to the *Bail Act* which actually provide a legislative basis for judicial monitoring because it is useful, and to provide Courts who use judicial monitoring as a process with powers both to enable judicial monitoring and to enforce judicial monitoring should it become necessary. However, as at today those powers do not exist. It is trite to say that the power to remove a person's liberty should as a matter of course be expressed in clear and unequivocal terms in legislation so that if the Supreme Court of Victoria is to have the power to revoke an order for bail on a hearing such as this that power should be clear and unequivocal.

It does not exist in the *Bail Act* as it presently stands. What is preserved in the Bail Act are the rights of persons to make applications for bail effectively notwithstanding the outcome of such applications in other Courts, and section18AA(2) of the *Bail Act* provides ‘nothing in this section derogates from the right of a person in custody to apply to the Supreme Court for bail’. Likewise, in s 18AH as [counsel] for the respondent has provided, s 18AH(1) provides ‘nothing in s 18AA, 18AC or 18AE derogates from any other right of application or appeal of the Supreme Court or the County Court’.

Here there is no express power under the *Bail Act* for the Supreme Court to revoke bail other than in the circumstances provided for in s 18AE*.* Section 18AHis part of the process which preserves the traditional rights of applicants to make applications for bail in the Supreme Court, as I have already said, irrespective of the outcome of the application they may have made in other courts, or to appeal as per s 18AA(2).

Nothing that I have said would prevent the continuation of judicial monitoring conditions. No cases have been cited to me, and on a very brief examination with the assistance of the ever present and very useful assisting lawyers in the registry of the division of the Court, the issue has not effectively arisen where there has been any question about the entitlement of the Supreme Court to revoke bail; it has only arisen in circumstances where that matter has not been in contention between the parties. Mr Moore has taken the point and it has to be dealt with obviously.

So, in those circumstances I have come to the conclusion that the application that is foreshadowed by [counsel for the respondent] under s 18AE is an application which must be made in the Children’s Court sitting at [redacted]. And it’s not open to me in my view to proceed to deal with the application he seeks to make.”

In *Re KA [No 2]* [2022] VSC 363 Beach JA was persuaded that the decision of Lasry J was “with respect, plainly wrong”, his Honour saying at [12]-[19]:

[12] “Prior to the enacting of the *Bail Act* in 1977, this Court had a well-recognised inherent jurisdiction to hear all bail matters; including the granting of bail and the revocation of bail as appropriate. The history of the Court’s jurisdiction was set out at length by the Full Court in *Beljajev v DPP* (Unreported, Full Court of Supreme Court of Victoria, Young CJ, Crockett and Ashley JJ, 8 August 1991). The enacting of the *Bail Act* in 1977 did not deprive this Court of its common law jurisdiction. Moreover, nothing in the Act as originally enacted deprived this Court of its well-recognised jurisdiction.

[13] Section 18AE (inserted into the *Bail Act* by the *Bail Amendment Act 2010*) says nothing about the jurisdiction of this Court to revoke bail: it merely provides that an application for revocation made by the informant or the DPP ‘is to be made … to the court to which the person is required to surrender under his or her conditions of bail’. In the event that the DPP or an informant in fact applied to a different court for the revocation of an accused’s bail, the question of what consequences might flow from the failure by the DPP or the informant to comply with the terms of the section would be one to be determined in accordance with well-known principles of statutory construction, as to which see *Project Blue Sky Inc v Australian Broadcasting Authority* (1998) 194 CLR 355, 388–391 [91]– [93]; *Davis (a pseudonym) v The Queen* (2016) 55 VR 1, 23 [88]; *Re Dukic* [2018] VSC 664, [17] (Champion J). Nothing in s 18AE, however, purports to deprive this Court of its ‘inherent jurisdiction to hear all bail matters’. A failure by the DPP or an informant to comply with s 18AE may have different consequences in different circumstances. Plainly, making an application to revoke bail to a court with no connexion to the underlying proceeding would be more likely to result in that court refusing to hear the application (for non-compliance with s 18AE) than in a case where the application has been made as a matter of urgency to a court then and there seized with the matter: see the factors relevant to the determination of such an issue set out in *Davis* (2016) 55 VR 1, 23 [88].

[14] Section 18AE was, as I have already said, originally introduced into the *Bail Act* by the *Bail Amendment Act 2010*. Nothing in that Act or its explanatory memorandum suggests that s 18AE (or the other sections introduced by that Act) were intended to limit the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Moreover, in construing the provisions of the *Bail Act* (including s 18AE as subsequently inserted) it is necessary to bear in mind that an order admitting a person to bail is not a final order: it may be revoked at any time: *Beljajev*, 30. Thus, when appropriate circumstances are drawn to this Court’s attention requiring the Court to revoke bail previously granted, this Court undoubtedly has the necessary power to make the appropriate order — even if any application for such an order ‘is to be made’ (or is required to be made) to a different court. Indeed, so much has been assumed in a number of first-instance decisions of this Court: see, eg, *Re Gloury-Hyde [No 2]* [2018] VSC 520, [13] (Priest JA); *Re Dukic* [2018] VSC 664, [16]–[18]; *Re AJ (Revocation of Bail)* [2021] VSC 395, [11]–[16] (Jane Dixon J).

[15] The respondent submitted that s 18AH(1) permitted an application for the revocation of bail to be made to this Court in the present circumstances. Section 18AH(1) provides: ‘Nothing in section 18, 18AA, 18AC or 18AE derogates from any other right of application or appeal to the Supreme Court or the County Court.’

[16] The respondent did not identify what ‘other right of application or appeal to the Supreme Court’ upon which the respondent relied in the present proceeding. Having regard to what I have said above, however, it is not necessary to consider the proper ambit and operation of s 18AH further.

[17] Next, I respectfully disagree with Lasry J’s characterisation of judicial monitoring as a ‘fiction’. Section 5AAA of the Act requires a bail decision maker considering the release of an accused on bail to impose any condition that, in the opinion of the bail decision-maker, will reduce the likelihood that the accused may endanger the safety or welfare of any person; or commit an offence while on bail; or interfere with a witness or otherwise obstruct the course of justice in any matter; or fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail. Section 5AAA(4) identifies a number of specified conditions which might be imposed. It is true that judicial monitoring (a concept described in detail in ss 48K and 48L of the *Sentencing Act 1991*) is not specifically referred to in s 5(4) of the Act. Section 5(4)(k) of the Act, however, permits a bail decision maker to impose ‘any other condition that the bail decision maker considers appropriate to impose in relation to the conduct of the accused’.

[18] While the question of whether a judicial monitoring condition is a condition ‘in relation to the conduct of [an] accused’ may be debated, merely because the concept of judicial monitoring is not mentioned in the Act does not make the imposition of such a condition a ’fiction‘. As Lasry J observed, judicial monitoring and judicial supervising have a legitimate and useful role to play in endeavouring to prevent some accused (particularly young people) from committing further offences once released on bail.

[19] Finally (on this issue) it follows from what I have said above that there is no issue about the need for ‘clear and unequivocal’ language in the *Bail Act* to give this Court power to revoke an order for bail in a judicial monitoring hearing (or any other hearing). That power has always existed. To the contrary, clear and unequivocal language would have been needed to take that power away from the Court. There is no such language in s 18AE or the Act more generally.”

In *Re TS (No 2)* [2024] VSC 218 the 16 year old TS had failed to appear on a judicial monitoring hearing, having missed all his Youth Justice appointments and having failed to live at home for the past 3 weeks. Beach JA revoked bail he had previously granted in *Re TS* [2024] VSC 164.

### **9.5.9 Appeal**

### **9.5.9.1 Appeal to the Supreme Court**

The **BA** sets out three circumstances in which the Director of Public Prosecutions, if satisfied that an appeal should be brought in the public interest, may appeal to the Supreme Court:

(i) under s.18AG – if a court refuses to revoke bail on an application to revoke brought by the informant or the DPP;

(ii) under s.24(4) – if a court refuses to revoke bail following an arrest without warrant by any member of the police force under s.24(1) [see **subsection 9.5.11** below];

(iii) under s.18A(1) – if a court grants bail and the DPP is satisfied that the conditions of bail are insufficient or the decision to grant bail contravenes the **BA** and the DPP is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so.

In this context, the term 'appeal' has been described by the Supreme Court as "anomalous" and "jarring". In *Beljajev & Pinhassovitch v DPP (Vic) & CDPP* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Appeal Division, unreported, 08/08/1991], the Court said:

"[T]he rights of appeal conferred on the Director of Public Prosecutions by sections [18AG] and 18A should be regarded as anomalous. Without those sections, of course, the Director would have had no right to appeal in a bail matter to the Court. But the use of the words 'appeal' is jarring and may be contrasted with the system of review which is available under the New South Wales Bail Act – see Pt. VI of that Act, which not only provides for review by way of rehearing on currently available material, but preserves an accused's right to make fresh application for bail in lieu of seeking review of a decision refusing bail; see also *R. v. Hamill* (1986) 25 A Crim R. 316 and *R. v. Pakis* (1981) 3 A Crim R. 132. Further, the possible lapse of time which section 18A at least contemplates (see subsection (4)) might well lead to the situation where the appeal would be resolved upon material which was no longer relevant. Were bail revoked on a view of that material, the outcome might be set at nought by a fresh and successful application for bail based on current material, such application being made very soon after the accused was taken back into custody. The mere fact, for example, that an accused person had been at large for a significant period pending the appeal and had not sought to break his bail might of itself be a matter of significance in any fresh bail application. Equally, commencement of the appellate process contemplated by section 18A would not appear to preclude application by the Crown under section 18(6); the application could take account of newly occurring circumstances; the appeal probably could not unless some power could be found to admit fresh evidence. This illustrates, in a different way, the anomaly of appeal in the context of bail."

In *DPP v Fallon* [2001] VSC 136 Beach J applied the above dicta in holding that "it is highly arguable" that the fact that the accused had not committed further offences "during the period of two months or more that he has been free on bail…is irrelevant for the purposes of an appeal pursuant to s.18A of the Bail Act."

In *DPP v Molinaro* [2017] VSC 624 Weinberg JA said at [7] & [9]:

[7] “It is clear that a ‘Director’s appeal’ against the grant of bail need not establish error of law. Rather, the Director may succeed if he can show that, on any ground, whether of law or fact, the discretion of the primary judge has miscarried, and can persuade the Court that a different order should have been made. Nonetheless, appellate courts, including this Court, on a s 18A appeal, should be reluctant to interfere with orders made below.”

[9] “In the event that the Court finds relevant error, and sets aside the decision below, it must then conduct a fresh hearing in relation to the grant of bail to the respondent. In other words, the relevant provision contemplates a two stage process, one regarding correction of error, and the second, in effect, a hearing de novo.”

Other cases in which the reasoning in *Beljajev* *& Pinhassovitch* has been applied include:

* *DPP v Morgan* [Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J, {MC32/94}, 16/06/1994];
* *DPP v Gomez* [Supreme Court of Victoria, Beach J, 07/08/1998];
* *DPP v Ghiller* [2000] VSC 435 per Beach J;
* *DPP v Antonios Mokbel* [2001] VSC 403 {MC10/01} per Cummins J;
* *DPP v Peterson* [2006] VSC 199 per King J;
* *DPP (Cth) v Khan* [2021] VSC 224 per Tinney J;
* *Re Molla* [2023] VSC 729 per Champion J.

In *DPP v Semaan* [2014] VSC 658 the DPP appealed against a decision by Judge McInerney varying a bail undertaking by suspending the existing conditions so that Mr Semaan could travel to Lebanon between 19/12/2014 & 09/01/2015 but also ordering there be two sureties – in the amounts of $15,000 & $207,000 – when none had previously been required. Croucher J dismissed the appeal on the basis that no error had been demonstrated. There had also been argument as to whether s.18A gave the DPP a right of appeal against an order varying bail as distinct from an order granting bail. His Honour said at [5]: “Since I am not persuaded that the judge’s decision was manifestly wrong, and since the appeal must therefore be dismissed in any event, it becomes unnecessary to decide whether the appeal is incompetent. That issue, and the related questions, while important, will have to await another day for their resolution.”

That ‘other day’ arose in *Re Zhang* [2023] VSC 8. The 65 year old respondent, a cardiothoracic surgeon, had been granted bail on serious driving charges including culpable driving. The conditions of bail included the surrender of travel documents and a prohibition on attending points of international departure. The special conditions of bail were subsequently varied by a magistrate to permit the respondent and his wife to travel temporarily to Singapore. The magistrate added conditions that the respondent–

1. provide a copy of his itinerary and proposed accommodation not less than 24 hours prior to his departure from Australia;
2. advise the informant of any interruptions to his return date to Australia that are due to factors outside of his control as soon as reasonably practicable; and
3. provide a surety in the amount of $1.5 million.

The DPP appealed alleging that the varied special conditions increase to unacceptable the risk that the respondent will fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of his bail. For reasons given at [39]-[46] Emerton P dismissed the appeal. On the jurisdictional issue as to whether s.18A gave the DPP a right of appeal against an order varying bail, Emerton P held at [16]-[17]:

[16] “In my view, this provision permits (and governs) an appeal against an order by a Magistrate varying a bail condition. The respondent did not contend otherwise.

[17] Although s 18A does not expressly refer to the Director’s right to appeal against a decision to vary a condition of (existing) bail, it must be construed as conferring such a right. A successful application to vary bail conditions results in the court — in granting the application to vary — making a fresh grant of bail with new conditions. The successful variation application obliges the accused to give a fresh bail undertaking acknowledging the new conditions. It cannot have been the intention of Parliament that s 18A would confer upon the Director a right of appeal against a decision fixing bail conditions on an initial grant of bail, while conferring no such right in relation to a subsequent decision varying bail conditions in a manner that reduces their stringency and compromises the protections.”

And as to the nature of the appeal, Emerton P approved and applied the dicta of Weinberg JA in *DPP v Molinaro* [2017] VSC 624 at [7] & [9] which is set out above. Her Honour also cited at [19] the following dicta of Young CJ, Crockett & Ashley JJ in *Beljajev & Pinhassovitch v DPP (Vic) & CDPP* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Appeal Division, unreported, 08/08/1991] at pp.29-30, in relation to an earlier (but substantially similar) version of s.18A(6), that:

‘It is not essential that the Director should be able to show an error of law in the narrow sense, although of course if error of law were demonstrated this Court would be obliged to substitute its own view of the order which should have been made. It is also open to the Director to show that in all the circumstances of the case the order was manifestly the wrong order to make even though it is not possible to point to any other identifiable error in the process by which the authority granting bail arrived at the order made. In other words, the Director is not in our opinion, confined to relying upon error of law as a ground of appeal but may succeed if he shows that on any ground, whether of fact or law, the discretion of the primary judge has miscarried and can persuade the Supreme Court that a different order should have been made. There are, however, two ways of the first importance in which an appeal in a matter of bail differs from an appeal against sentence. Both stem from the very nature of bail. The first that an order admitting a person to bail is not a final order: it may be revoked at any time. The second is that the granting of bail is essentially a matter of practice and procedure. These two considerations both independently and in combination operate to impose on any appellate court a severe restraint upon interference with the order appealed from. In civil and in criminal cases alike, appellate Courts have frequently refused to interfere with a primary judge’s decision on a matter of practice and procedure.’

In *DPP v Spiteri* [2016] VSC 335 Coghlan JA dismissed a Director’s appeal against a grant of bail by a magistrate, holding at [22]: “I probably would not have reached the same conclusion. I do not, however, regard the material as sufficiently clear to vitiate the grant of bail below.”

In *Re Brent Reker, Tara Egglestone and Pierce Williams* [2019] VSC 81 and in *Re Martinow* [2019] VSC 118 Beale J allowed a Director’s appeal against a grant of bail by a magistrate in circumstances where the magistrate had failed to give adequate reasons. In revoking bail, his Honour held that exceptional circumstances did not exist to warrant the grant of bail and that each of the respondents was an unacceptable risk. At [69] his Honour noted that Ms Egglestone’s aboriginality “is an important consideration [b]ut…it does not swamp all other considerations”.

In *DPP v Mikael* [2020] VSC 492 Champion J dismissed a Director’s appeal against a grant of bail from the County Court on charges of attempted armed robbery, assault with instrument, intentionally damaging property, commit an indictable offence whilst on bail, handling stolen goods and attempted aggravated carjacking, holding that the grant of bail was 'reasonably open' to the Judge.

In *DPP (Cth) v Carrick (a pseudonym)* [2021] VSC 696 the 14 year old autistic respondent had been charged with two terrorism offences based on a number of his utterances about terrorism and his expressed intention to engage in terrorist behaviour. The respondent was granted bail by the Children’s Court, Lasry J saying of this at [30]: “His Honour had obviously given the matter careful thought and crafted strict and detailed conditions to deal with the minutiae of the risk that had been litigated.” At [7] his Honour said: “Section 18A(6) of the *Bail Act* makes the role of the appellate Court tolerably clear. I have to decide whether I think a different order should have been made and, if I do, the appeal succeeds. If that were to occur, it would then be necessary to conduct another application for bail and rule on that.” In dismissing the DPP appeal, Lasry J held that–

* the ChCV did not fail to give proper weight to the surrounding circumstances;
* his Honour was conscious of the nature and seriousness of the alleged offending and the nature of the risk posed by the respondent;
* he was unpersuaded that a different order should have been made.

In *DPP v Abdelkhalek* [2024] VSC 111 Croucher J granted an appeal by DPP against an order varying bail. In March 2022 the accused JA, a Moroccan national resident in Australia but not an Australian citizen, was charged with rape and released on bail. The trial is listed to commence in the County Court in July 2024. In February 2024 a judge varied bail by suspending conditions in order to allow JA to travel to Morocco for two weeks to farewell his dying mother. Instead of a surety, the judge imposed a condition requiring JA to provide a deed acknowledging forfeiture of work tools and vehicle should he fail to return to Australia. There is no extradition treaty between Morocco and Australia. JA had no prior convictions. JA’s partner and six-month-old child are Australian citizens and intend to travel to Morocco with JA. Croucher J set aside the judge’s orders and held a fresh bail hearing. In *viva voce* evidence, JA’s partner said she believes JA will answer bail and is prepared to be surety in a sum secured by equity in her mortgaged apartment. JA was bailed on his own undertaking with conditions which were temporarily suspended to allow travel to Morocco, conditional upon JA’s partner being surety in the amount of $100,000. At [53] Croucher J said:

[53] “…I shall determine this appeal in accordance with the approaches endorsed by Weinberg JA in *Molinaro* and Emerton P in *Zhang*, but with a recognition that a bail decision concerning unacceptable risk is not discretionary but rather is as the Court of Appeal described in *Zayneh* — namely, that such a decision involves ‘a duty to be exercised if a particular state of satisfaction is reached’ and is an ‘evaluative conclusion’.”

### **9.5.9.2 Appeal to the Court of Appeal**

Section 18A(12) of the **BA** provides that the respondent or the DPP may appeal to the Court of Appeal from a decision of a single judge of the Supreme Court made under s.18A. This provides a legislative endorsement of the decision of the Court of Appeal – constituted by 5 judges – in *R v Fernandez* (2001) 5 VR 374; [2002] VSCA 115 at [25] which overruled a decision to the contrary in *Beljajev & Pinhassovitch v DPP (Vic) & CDPP* [Supreme Court of Victoria-Appeal Division, unreported, 08/08/1991].

In addition s.17(2) of the *Supreme Court Act 1986* provides:

“Unless otherwise expressly provided by this or any other Act, an appeal lies to the Court of Appeal from any determination of the Trial Division constituted by a Judge of the Court.”

In *Shannon Taylor v DPP* [2020] VSCA 142 the appellant was charged with offences including trafficking in a commercial quantity of a drug of dependence, methylamphetamine; being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and committing an indictable offence whilst on bail. Although Lasry J was satisfied that “exceptional circumstances have been established, primarily on the basis of the inordinate delay that will occur, along with the impact that COVID-19 is likely to have on the prison population”, he nonetheless refused bail because “there is an unacceptable risk that the applicant will continue to offend whilst on bail”: see [2020] VSC 146 at [51] & [54]. The remandee’s appeal on the unacceptable risk issue was dismissed, Priest, T Forrest & Weinberg JJA stating at [4]‑[5]:

“It is clear that the appeal is to be determined according to [the principles in] *House v The Queen* (1936) 55 CLR 499, 505 (Dixon, Evatt and McTiernan JJ): see *Robinson v The Queen* (2015) 47 VR 226. In other words, this Court may only intervene if it appears that the primary judge has mistaken the facts; has acted on an erroneous principle of law; has taken into account irrelevant matters or has failed to take into account relevant matters; or has clearly given insufficient weight, or excessive weight, to some matter taken into account; or unless the decision is unreasonable or plainly unjust. In our view, it is plain that the decision appealed from was correct. The appeal must therefore be dismissed”.

In *Re Zayneh* [2023] VSC 470 Beach JA had refused bail to the 39 year old applicant with a limited criminal history who was one of 7 co-accused charged in July 2021 with conspiring to import 1.6 tonnes of border controlled drugs: see summary in **subsection 9.4.1.3** above. His appeal to the Court of Appeal was dismissed: *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311. At [37]-[44] Walker, Taylor & Boyce JJA said:

[37] “We note at the outset that this matter is in federal jurisdiction, because it concerns a person charged with offences against the laws of the Commonwealth. Thus the Act applies because it is picked up as federal law by s 68 of the *Judiciary Act 1903* (Cth). The current state of the authorities is that the Charter applies to the question of bail for Commonwealth offences*: DPP (Cth) v Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 727 [36]; [2009] VSCA 26, recording a concession by the Commonwealth DPP. At least in so far as s 32 of the Charter is concerned, that is correct. That is, s 68 ‘picks up’ and applies the Act as interpreted in light of the Charter.

[38] Although it has been said that a decision to grant or refuse bail is discretionary {see e.g. *Roberts v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 28, [4]; *Ha (a pseudonym) v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [4]}, that label is not, strictly speaking, accurate in relation to a decision pursuant to s 4E of the Act. That is because, pursuant to that section, a bail decision maker *must* refuse bail if (relevantly for present purposes):

(a) the bail decision maker is satisfied that there is a risk that the accused would, if released on bail, fail to surrender into custody in accordance with the conditions of bail; and

(b) that the risk of which the bail decision maker is satisfied is an ‘unacceptable risk’;

and, if the decision maker is not so satisfied, then the accused has an entitlement to bail under s 4.

[39] The power thus conferred on the decision maker ought not be described as a ‘discretion’ — rather, it is a duty to be exercised if a particular state of satisfaction is reached. The respondent accepted as much.

[40] Nonetheless, in accordance with the authorities in this Court concerning the standard of review on an appeal from a bail decision {*Barbaro* (2009) 20 VR 717, 719–20 [10]–[11]; *Ha* [2021] VSCA 64, [4]; *Roberts* [2021] VSCA 28, [4]}, such an appeal is to be decided in accordance with the principles set out in *House v The King* (1936) 55 CLR 499, 505; see also *Robinson v The Queen* [2015] VSCA 161, [86]. That is because, although not discretionary, the decision to grant or refuse bail, turning as it does on whether the decision maker is satisfied that a particular risk is ‘unacceptable’, is one that requires appellate restraint: see the factors set out in Minister for Immigration and Border Protection v SZVFW (2018) 264 CLR 541, 591-2 [150]-[151]; [2018] HCA 30. Thus, as this Court observed in *Barbaro* at [10], quoting the earlier decision of the Full Court in *Beljajev v DPP (Vic) and DPP(Cth)* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 08/08/1991 at pp.29-30]:

‘It is not essential that the Director should be able to show an error of law in the narrow sense, although of course if error of law were demonstrated this Court would be obliged to substitute its own view of the order which should have been made. It is also open to the Director to show that in all the circumstances of the case the order was manifestly the wrong order to make even though it is not possible to point to any other identifiable error in the process by which the authority granting bail arrived at the order made.

…

There are, however, two ways of the first importance in which an appeal in a matter of bail differs from an appeal against sentence. Both stem from the very nature of bail. The first that an order admitting a person to bail is not a final order: it may be revoked at any time. The second is that the granting of bail is essentially a matter of practice and procedure. These two considerations both independently and in combination operate to impose on any appellate court a severe restraint upon interference with the order appealed from. In civil and in criminal cases alike, appellate Courts have frequently refused to interfere with a primary judge’s decision on a matter of practice and procedure.’

[41] Applying these principles, and noting that no specific error is alleged by the appellant, we do not consider that the primary judge erred in refusing bail on the basis that he was satisfied that there was an unacceptable risk that the appellant would not surrender. That is, that decision was not ‘unreasonable or plainly unjust’ {*House v The King* (1936) 55 CLR 499, 504–5; [1936] HCA 40}, and it was open to the judge to reach the evaluative conclusion that he reached.

[42] We have considered the 14 matters on which the appellant relied in support of his submission that the judge’s conclusion was unreasonable. We are not persuaded that they require the conclusion that it was not open to the judge to conclude that there was an unacceptable risk that the appellant would fail to surrender. The matters relied upon reflected one side of the ledger in the evaluative exercise required. But there are matters on the other side of the ledger. In particular, as the judge found:

(a) the nature and seriousness of the offending, and the likely sentence if the appellant is found guilty, which would be measured in decades, is such that the appellant would have a powerful motive to flee the jurisdiction;

(b) the appellant appears to possess sufficient resources — including $5 million that has not been located by police — to flee the jurisdiction without the need for any passport that might have been surrendered;

(c) the amounts involved in the appellant’s alleged offending are such that the fact that sureties provided by his family would be forfeited if he fled might be of little moment to him; and

(d) electronic monitoring would likely pose little problem for the appellant, who appears to be well-resourced and who would likely prefer to avoid the possibility of a very long period of incarceration.

[43] The most significant of the 14 matters on which the appellant relied was the period of time the appellant has spent in custody awaiting trial. That period was a little over two years at the time of the bail application. It is anticipated to be considerably longer before the trial of the appellant can commence — the judge found that a trial is unlikely to commence before 2025, and that it is a ‘real possibility’ that it will not commence before 2026, leading to a likely delay of four years, and a possible delay of five years, although his Honour observed that this predictive exercise was ‘speculative’. We accept the judge’s conclusion about the possible timing of the appellant’s trial. In our view, it was nonetheless open to the judge to conclude that the point had not yet been reached where the delay was such that the risk that the appellant would not surrender was not an ‘unacceptable risk’.

[44] The final matter on which the appellant relied was the Charter, which was said to enhance the importance or weight to be attributed to delay in assessing whether a grant of bail is appropriate. No party disputed the proposition, articulated in *Barbaro* at [40]-[41], that the Charter does not ‘require any departure from the existing approach to the treatment of delay as an issue in bail applications’, and no submission was made that the Charter required any particular construction of the Act. Courts called upon to apply ss 4A and 4E of the Act ought to bear steadily in mind, in assessing whether the tests in those sections are satisfied, the fact that s 21(5) confers the right to a trial without unreasonable delay: see e.g. *Gray v DPP* [2008] VSC 4, [12]; *Re Dickson* [2008] VSC 538, [22]; *R v Rich (Ruling No 19)* [2008] VSC 538, [28]; *Woods v DPP* (2014) 238 A Crim R 84, 100 [47]; [2014] VSC 1. The existence of that right properly informs the assessment both of whether there are exceptional circumstances for the purposes of s 4A and whether a risk of flight, or other risk referred to in s 4E, is unacceptable. But we do not consider that the Charter required any different outcome in the present case. It remained open for the judge to reach the conclusion he reached. We note that the judge did not refer to the Charter, because no argument based on the Charter was made before him. Quite properly, that failure expressly to consider the Charter was not said to give rise to specific error.”

In a subsequent bail application the applicant was granted bail on extremely stringent conditions: see *Re Zayneh (No 2)* [2024] VSC 374 which is summarised in **subsection 9.4.1.1** above.

In *Re FT* [2024] VSC 158 Elliott J had refused a further grant of bail to the 14 year old applicant who was alleged to have engaged in multiple breaches of bail conditions during the previous week when he had been on bail granted by his Honour: see summary in **subsection 9.4.1.3** above. FT’s appeal to the Court of Appeal was dismissed: *FT (a pseudonym) v The King* [2024] VSCA 90. At [51]-[64] Beach, McLeish & Niall JJA discussed the applicable standard for appellate review, saying specifically at [51]:

[51] “For the reasons that follow, an appeal to this Court from an order refusing the grant of bail attracts the principles in *House v The King* (1936) 55 CLR 499, 504-505. That is so for two reasons. First, properly characterised, the decision is discretionary because applying the Act to a given set of facts does not necessarily produce a unique, and therefore correct, legal outcome. Second, and regardless of the first point, the nature of the decision – as interlocutory and relating to a matter of practice and procedure – is such as to attract appellate restraint of the kind embodied in *House v The King*.”

Their Honours distinguished the contrasting view which a differently constituted Court of Appeal had expressed in *Zayneh v The King* [2023] VSCA 311 at [38]-[39], saying at [59]-[61]:

[59] “We note that this Court recently said that the decision whether to grant bail should strictly be described as a duty to be exercised if a particular state of mind is reached, not as a discretion. That matter was, however, not in issue in that case and the Court did not have the benefit of argument as we have. In any event, even if the ‘strict’ designation of the bail decision is thought to be in issue, the point is not important for present purposes. In that matter, the Court applied the *House v The King* test in determining an appeal from a decision to refuse bail.

[60] It follows that the statutory power to grant bail does not involve an evaluation that produces only one right answer and, applying that approach, the decision is properly seen as discretionary.

[61] There are other reasons that further justify appellate restraint in relation to the decision whether to grant bail, which relate to the nature of bail itself and in themselves support the application of the *House v The King* test. A decision to grant or refuse bail is an interlocutory decision about a matter of practice and procedure. As to the necessity to exercise caution in appellate intervention in relation to matters of practice and procedure, see *Adam P Brown Male Fashions Pty Ltd v Philip Morris Inc* (1981) 148 CLR 170,176-177; *Hogan v Australian Crime Commission* (2010) 240 CLR 651, 665 [34]. Further, it is not a final order and may be revoked at any time. For both of these reasons, this Court has shown appropriate restraint in reviewing decisions in relation to bail: *Zayneh* [2023] VSCA 311, [40]; *Fernandez v DPP* (2002) 5 VR 374, 386-90, [25]-[31]; [2002] VSCA 115; *Barbaro v DPP* (2009) 20 VR 717, 719-20, [10]; [2009] VSCA 26; *Beljajev v DPP (Vic)* [Supreme Court of Victoria Appeal Division, unreported, 08/08/1991 at pp.29-30].”

The Court of Appeal also addressed additional legal submissions raised by the appellant as follows:

* At [62]: “Section 32 of the *Charter* provides no support for the appellant’s argument [that the decision whether to refuse bail is evaluative rather than discretionary]. Section 32 depends on the existence of a constructional choice: see *Momcilovic v The Queen* (2011) 245 CLR 1, 49-50 [50]. It is not clear that there is any such choice available based on the terms of s.17(2) of the *Supreme Court Act*, in circumstances where it applies to a much broader range of decisions than bail decisions and the standard of appellate review is determined by the nature of the decision in question rather than the terms of s.17(2). In any event, as the respondent correctly observes, it is not clear that the appellant’s proposed construction would be more consistent with the relevant rights given that it would also broaden the scope for an unsuccessful informant or the Director of Public Prosecutions to appeal a decision to grant bail. Further, the appellant seeks to deploy the rights that attach to him as a minor to construe the nature of an appeal from a bail decision but, as a matter of construction, the nature of the appeal cannot depend on the age of the appellant.”
* At [63]: “[T]he appellant submitted that the right to liberty is one of the guiding principles of the *Bail Act*: see s.1B(1)(b). As a result, he argued, a broader standard of appellate review should apply where appellants’ liberty is at stake. However, this submission ignores the balance sought to be achieved by the Act between the right to liberty and the other guiding principles that underpin it, including maximising the safety of the community and persons affected by crime to the greatest extent possible: s.1B(1)(a). Moreover, the appellant’s submission provides no basis as a matter of logic for concluding that the decision whether to grant bail is evaluative but not discretionary.”
* At [64]: “…[T]he fact that the power to refuse bail [in relation to a child] might be characterised as a power to be exercised as a last resort {s.3B(1)(b)} does not mean that there is only one correct legal answer. The concept of last resort is an important protective mechanism in bail decisions with respect to children, however it is a conclusion reached having exhausted the availability of suitable alternatives that meet the purposes of the *Bail Act* as it applies to children. It does not mean that either the two qualifying conditions or the ultimate conclusion admit of one legal answer. This feature in relation to children is not sufficient to outweigh the other statutory features that indicate that the power is discretionary. Further, for the reasons already explained, the nature of an appeal cannot depend on the appellant’s age.”

In conclusion, in dismissing FT’s appeal the Court of Appeal held – for reasons detailed in the specified paragraphs – that Elliott J had not erred–

* in his consideration of remote hearsay evidence: paragraphs [66]-[74];
* in finding that the prosecution case was strong: paragraphs [75]-[84];
* in finding that an immediate custodial sentence was likely: paragraphs [85]-[91]; and
* in finding that the appellant posed an unacceptable risk: paragraphs [92]-[98].

### **9.5.10 Breach of bail**

**OFFENCE UNDER S.30 BA – FAILURE TO ANSWER BAIL**

Section 30(1) of the **BA** provides that any person released on bail who fails without reasonable cause, the proof of which lies upon the person, to attend in accordance with the person’s bail undertaking and surrender into custody is guilty of an offence against the **BA**. The prescribed penalty is Level 7 (2 years maximum) imprisonment.

**REPEALED OFFENCE UNDER S.30A BA IN RELATION TO BREACH OF BAIL**

Prior to 25/03/2024 s.30A of the **BA** provided that it was an offence for an adult accused to breach, without reasonable excuse, any conduct condition of bail other than a condition requiring the accused to attend and participate in bail support services. The prescribed penalty was 30 p.u. or 3 months’ imprisonment. If an infringement notice was served for this offence, the infringement penalty under s.32A(4) was 1 p.u. It had not been an offence for a child accused to breach a conduct condition of bail since s.30A(3) came into operation on 02/05/2016. Sections 30A & 32A of the **BA** were repealed as and from 25/03/2024 by ss.39 & 41 of the *Bail Amendment Act 2023*.

As and from 02/12/2024 a new offence was created by the addition of a new s.30A of the **BA** which provides: “An accused on bail must not commit a Schedule 1 offence or Schedule 2 offence while on bail. Penalty: 30 penalty units or 3 months imprisonment.”

As and from 26/03/2025 this new s.30A of the BA was repealed. It has effectively been replaced by a new s.30B of the **BA** and new s.49F of the *Summary Offences Act 1966* headed “**Contravening certain conduct conditions of bail undertakings**” as described below.

**OFFENCE UNDER S.30B BA –**

**OFFENCE TO COMMIT AN INDICTABLE OFFENCE WHILE ON BAIL**

Prior to 25/03/2024 s.30B of the **BA** provided that it was an offence for an accused to commit an indictable offence whilst on bail. The prescribed penalty was 30 p.u. or 3 months’ imprisonment. Section 30B was repealed as and from 25/03/2024 by s.40 of the *Bail Amendment Act 2023*.

As and from 26/03/2025 new s.30B of the **BA** provides – under a penalty of 30 p.u. or 3 months imprisonment – “An accused on bail must not commit an indictable offence while on bail.”

This new s.30B also has a Note which reads “See sections 16 and 33 of the **Sentencing Act 1991** and sections 411 and 413 of the **Children, Youth and Families Act 2005**.”

**OFFENCE UNDER S.49F SUMMARY OFFENCES ACT 1966 –**

**CONTRAVENING CERTAIN CONDUCT CONDITIONS OF BAIL UNDERTAKINGS**

As and from 26/03/2025 a new summary offence is created by s.49F of the *Summary Offences Act 1966* which provides:

* + - * 1. Subject to subsections (2) and (3), an accused bail must not, without reasonable excuse, contravene a conduct condition to which the grant of bail is subject.

Penalty: 30 p.u. or 3 months imprisonment.

* + - * 1. The reference in subsection (1) to a conduct condition does not refer to a conduct condition [as defined in the **BA**] that requires the accused to attend and participate in bail support services [as defined in the **BA**].
        2. Subsection (1) does not apply to a child [as defined in the **CYFA**].

**SOME OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF AN ACCUSED’S BREACH OF BAIL**

Section 26(2) of the **BA** empowers a court to issue a warrant to apprehend a person charged with or convicted of an offence who has given a bail undertaking and has failed to appear before the court in breach of the bail undertaking.

Other consequences of a person’s breach of bail both upon the person and upon a bail guarantor are set out in s.32 of the **BA** which–

1. empowers a court to declare forfeited a deposit of money or other security made as a condition of bail if the person released fails to appear in accordance with the person’s bail undertaking; but
2. gives the person bailed the same right as a bail guarantor has under s.6 of the *Crown Proceedings Act 1958* to apply for an order varying or rescinding the forfeiture.

In *DPP v Mokbel & Mokbel* [2006] VSC 158 at [17] Gillard J noted that s.6 of the *Crown Proceedings Act 1958* provides for a two hearing process. The first hearing is pursuant to s.6(1) which provides:

“Where a court is satisfied that a person has failed to observe a condition of bail the court shall declare the bail to be forfeited and shall order that the amount undertaken by the surety or sureties to be paid to Her Majesty in the event of such a breach be paid to the proper officer of the court forthwith or within such time as the court allows and that in default of payment of that amount in accordance with the order that the amount be obtained by seizing and selling the property of the surety or sureties and in default, in whole or in part, that the surety or sureties be imprisoned for the term (not exceeding two years) fixed by the order.”

At [18] Gillard J further noted that once the Court is satisfied that an accused person has failed to observe a condition of bail, the Court is bound to declare that the bail be forfeited, and order that the surety pay the amount undertaken. In other words, his Honour said, applying *R v Baker* [1971] VR 717, “the undertakings given by both the accused and the surety are self-executing and the Court is obliged to make the declaration and the orders”. However, his Honour emphasized at [31] that “the Crown has to prove that the accused has failed to observe a condition of bail, and that fact has to be proven like any other fact in the proceeding”. At [32]-[41] his Honour discussed the case law relating to “failure”, noting at [39] that:

“In most cases the mere failure to attend may be sufficient. The surrounding circumstances may very quickly establish that it was a deliberate act.”

In *DPP v Mokbel & Mokbel* [2006] VSC 158 at [19] Gillard J said: “The second hearing is found in s.6(4) of the Act.” That section gives a possible remedy to a surety against whom an order of forfeiture has been made:

“Where bail is declared to be forfeited under subsection (1) any surety may at any time within 28 days after the making of the order or, if the order was made in the absence of the surety, within 28 days after the order first comes to his notice apply to the Court that made the order to vary or rescind the order on the ground that it would be unjust to require him to pay the amount undertaken to be paid having regard to all the circumstances of the case and the court may vary or rescind the order…”

The burden is on the bail guarantor to satisfy the court as to why the full amount of the bail guarantee should not be forfeited: *R v Waltham Forest Justices; Ex parte Parfrey* [1980] Crim LR 571. However, in *Re Wilkinson* [1983] 2 VR 250 Crockett J held at 254-255 that “proof of full and proper performance by a surety of the duties imposed on him by his suretyship will ordinarily entitle the surety to relief under the section. However, that proposition is…true only of a ‘genuine’ surety.”

The principles governing the determination of an application for relief by a bail guarantor were summarized by Crockett J in *Re Condon* [1973] VR 427 at 431:

“The surety's obligation was to take all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the principal at his trial. The primary question on the present application must therefore remain - did the applicant take such steps? If she has, then no doubt she will have gone a long way, if not the whole way, to earn the total or partial relief sought. If she has not, then before any relief can be granted facts must emerge that establish that notwithstanding such failure, it would be unjust in all the circumstances not to vary or rescind the order."

In *IMO an Application by Melincianu* [2005] VSC 89 a surety of $100,000 had been forfeited by the Supreme Court. Kaye J allowed an application by the surety to vary the amount he was required to pay to $70,000. At [14]-[20] Kaye J, adopting the above dicta of Crockett J in *Re Condon* and dicta of Vincent J in *Re Cenzig Arslan* [Supreme Court of Victoria, unreported, 18/03/1986], listed the principles governing such an application:

1. The grant of bail and the setting of a surety is not a mere formality. Thus an order, either rescinding or varying an order forfeiting bail, should not be lightly made.
2. The role of a surety for the grant of bail is important and is to act as a deterrent to the principal absconding. In particular the surety undertakes the responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the principal at the trial.
3. The first and primary enquiry to be made on an application by a surety for relief is whether the surety has taken all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the principal at trial.
4. However, if the surety has not taken such reasonable steps, the court may in an appropriate case permit a reduction in the amount to be paid pursuant to the undertaking of suretyship on grounds of hardship.

In *DPP v Lipp & Anor* [2008] VSC 203 Whelan J had ordered the forfeiture of a surety in the sum of $300,000 after the accused – the surety’s de facto wife’s brother – had absconded on the second day of a trial. Applying the principles set out by Kaye J in *Melincianu’s Case*, Curtain J allowed an application under s.6(4) of the *Crown Proceedings Act 1958*. Having found the requisite hardship established, her Honour varied the amount of the surety forfeited to $175,000:

“I fix that amount because it is still a substantial sum of money and, as such, is not likely to give the impression in the minds of right thinking persons that the court, in granting relief from forfeiture, is diminishing the importance of the obligations each surety undertakes and that such a figure may not necessitate the selling of the family home.”

See also *Renate Mokbel v DPP (Vic) and DPP (Cth)* [2006] VSC 487 where Gillard J dismissed an application for relief against forfeiture by a so-called surety whom His Honour was “not persuaded” was a “genuine” surety. After setting out the relevant principles, the Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal against this decision of Gillard J: see [2007] VSCA 195. See also *R v Serrano (Ruling No.6)* [2007] VSC 359 at [5] per Kaye J.

### **9.5.11 Arrest of person released on bail**

Under s.24(1) of the **BA** any police officer, or any protective services officer on duty at a designated place, may without warrant arrest any person who has been released on bail–

(a) if the officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the person is likely to breach the bail undertaking or any condition of bail, or has reasonable cause to suspect that the person is breaching or has breached any such condition;

(b) if the officer is notified in writing by any of the person’s bail guarantors that the bail guarantor believes that the person is likely to breach the bail undertaking and for that reason the bail guarantor wishes to be relieved of his obligations as a bail guarantor; or

(c) if the officer has reasonable grounds for believing that any of the person’s bail guarantors are dead, or that for any other reason the security is no longer sufficient.

Sections 24(1B) & 24(1A) of the **BA** limit the power of a protective services officer to arrest without warrant if the person is at, or in the vicinity of, a designated place and require the protective services officer to hand the person into the custody of a police officer as soon as practicable after the person is arrested.

Section 24(2) of the **BA** sets out the procedure which a police officer must follow in dealing with a person arrested under s.24(1).

Under s.24(3) of the **BA** a bail justice or court dealing with a person arrested under s.24(1)–

(a) if of the opinion that the person has breached or is likely to breach the bail undertaking or a condition of bail may–

* revoke the bail and remand the person in custody with a direction to the officer in charge of the prison–
  + if the direction is given by a court, that the person be brought before the court at the time when the person is required by the bail undertaking;
  + if the direction is given by a bail justice, that the person be brought before the court to which the person was required to surrender in answer to bail on the next working day or, if the next working day is not practicable, within 2 working days [see s.346(4)(b) of the CYFA]; or
* release the person on the original bail undertaking; or
* release the person on a new bail undertaking with or without a condition that requires one or more bail guarantees; or

(b) if not of that opinion– must release the person on the original bail undertaking.

Under s.24(3A) of the **BA**, if a child is arrested under s.24(1) and is brought before a court, the court must not remand the child in custody for a period longer than 21 clear days.

The **BA** sets out three additional circumstances in which a person admitted to bail may be arrested on a warrant issued:

(i) under s.25 – by a court which is of opinion that it is necessary or advisable in the interests of justice that the conditions of bail should be amended or supplemented; or

(ii) under s.26(1) – by the bail decision by whom the person was admitted to bail if of opinion that the person was released with insufficient security or with security which has become insufficient; or

(iii) under s.26(2) – by a court before whom a person charged with or convicted of an offence has failed to appear in breach of the person’s bail undertaking.

### **9.5.12 Extradition bail**

In *Formica & Forni v Victoria Police* [2020] VSC 719 warrants had been issued in Queensland against each of the applicants on charges of conspiracy to import a commercial quantity of a border--controlled drug and other offences under the *Criminal Code* (Qld). Both applicants were arrested in Victoria and a magistrate ordered that the applicants be taken in custody to Queensland. On an application to review the decision of the magistrate to refuse bail, Hollingworth J held that although some errors were shown, neither applicant had demonstrated exceptional circumstances. The applicants were ordered to be taken in custody to Queensland. In discussing the nature of extradition bail, Hollingworth J said at [83]: “Queensland’s Bail Act will apply when the applicants apply for trial bail in that State. But, given the purpose and limited duration of extradition bail, it makes sense to give primacy to the bail law of the place of arrest, as is required under s.88 of the *Service and Execution of Process Act 1992* (Cth).”

### **9.5.13 No concept of being ‘owed bail’**

*In the matter of Boris Beljajev* [2006] VSC 259 the applicant had “an extraordinary legal history, of lengthy trials, grants of bail, revoking of bail, and subsequent acquittals” over a ten year period in relation to charges of drug importation. This was described by King J as “possibly the most complicated history of bail of anyone charged with criminal matters in Victoria’s history”. At [22]-[24] King J said:

“[O]ne cannot say he is owed bail because he was kept in custody for a lengthy period of time on matters of which he was ultimately acquitted…The fact that someone has been detained in custody on previous charges, of which he is acquitted, does not demonstrate exceptional circumstances. There is no doubt that persons who are remanded in custody for substantial periods of time, and ultimately acquitted of the matters charged, may have a sense of grievance as to the fairness of their detention. There is no system in place for compensation for the time lost, relationships damaged or income foregone…[T]he only relevance of the applicant’s legal history over that time is a demonstration of his ability to adhere to the conditions of bail. That by itself would not be an exceptional circumstance.”

### **9.5.14 Bail applications by children compared with adults**

Apart from the specific differences set out in **sections 9.1, 9.2.1, 9.2.2, 9.2.11 & 9.4.12** above, the **BA** applies equally to an application for bail by a child and by an adult. The cases discussed in earlier sections, most of which involve adult accused, contain legal principles which by and large are equally applicable to a child accused.

However, factual differences remain, a consequence of the fact that a child generally does not have the maturity, understanding, development or circumstances of an adult. Thus, requiring a child to pay a monetary deposit to secure his/her release on bail is extremely rare. Requiring a child to find one or more sureties to secure his/her release on bail is very rare.

And the difference in maturity between a child and an adult, together with the enormous difference between child and adult sentencing philosophies and sentencing orders, often results in the show compelling reason hurdle being lower for a child than for an adult charged with a similar offence. Thus, for instance, a young child who had failed to attend court in answer to his bail because he had forgotten the date and his mum had not reminded him of it might satisfy the court that he was not an unacceptable risk of failing to appear in the future whereas an adult, in similar circumstances, might not. And so on.

In summary, it is noteworthy that-

* in *Re FA* [2018] VSC 372 at [23] Priest JA said: “**[I]n my view, the custody or detention of a child should be avoided unless unavoidable.**”
* in *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438 at [14] T Forrest J said: “**Children are rightly afforded a special status by the Act and any assessment of ‘exceptional circumstances’ in the case of a child must be viewed through the prism of s 3B(1).**”
* in *Re ER* [2022] VSC 88 at [31] Kaye JA said:

“It is well accepted that the youth of an applicant may be a significant factor to be taken into account in determining whether exceptional circumstances have been established: *Re JO* [2018] VSC 438, [14]; *Re JF* [2020] VSC 250, [32]; *Re Johnson* [2021] VSC 800, [63]. Similarly, in determining whether the risk of an applicant reoffending, while on bail, is unacceptable, the young age and attendant circumstances of the applicant are regarded as important considerations: *HA v The Queen* [2021] VSCA 64, [6], [73]; *Re Andrew* [2022] VSC 46, [25].”

### **9.5.15 Bail applications by persons aged 18 or over in a remand centre**

Section 3C of the **BA** provides that if–

1. the accused in a criminal proceeding in any court is aged 18 or over and is in a remand centre (within the meaning of the CYFA) pursuant to a remand warrant issued when the accused was aged under 18; and
2. the criminal proceeding relates to one or more offences alleged to have been committed when the accused was aged 18 or over-

a bail decision maker must take into account (in addition to any other requirements of the **BA**)–

1. whether the accused has engaged in conduct that threatens the good order and safe operation of the youth remand centre; and
2. whether the accused can be properly controlled in the youth remand centre.

### **9.5.16 Power to return accused to youth justice centre**

Section 5A of the **BA** applies to an accused in a criminal proceeding in the Supreme Court or the County Court who is undergoing a sentence of detention in a youth justice centre. Where the proceeding is adjourned, the Supreme Court or County Court, instead of remanding the accused in custody, may direct that the accused be returned to the youth justice centre until the end of the sentence of detention or the adjourned date (whichever is the sooner) and either–

* grant the accused bail on a condition that the accused is not to be admitted to bail until the end of the sentence of detention; or
* refuse bail and direct that the accused be brought before the Supreme Court or the County Court at a later date for it to consider the granting of bail.

### **9.5.17 Bail support services**

In s.3 of the **BA** a “**bail support service**” is defined as a service provided to assist an accused to comply with the accused’s bail undertaking (whether or not that type of service is also provided to persons other than an accused on bail) including, but not limited to-

1. bail support programs;
2. medical treatment;
3. counselling services or treatment services for substance abuse or other behaviour which may lead to commission of offences;
4. counselling, treatment, support or assistance services for one or more of the following-

* a mental illness;
* an intellectual disability;
* an acquired brain injury;
* autism spectrum disorder;
* a neurological impairment, including, but not limited to, dementia;

1. services to resolve homelessness.

In s.3 “**Aboriginal bail support service**” is defined as a bail support service that is provided by an entity that–

1. is managed by Aboriginal people; or
2. operates for the benefit of Aboriginal people.

Section 3B(2) of the BA provides that in making a determination under the **BA** in relation to a child, a bail decision maker may take into account any recommendation or information contained in a report provided by a bail support service.

### **9.5.17.1 CISP – Bail support service for adults**

The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) is a support and referral service potentially available to any adult charged with an offence who is experiencing physical or mental disabilities or illnesses, drug and alcohol dependency, homelessness or inadequate social, family and economic support that contributes to their offending.

The CISP program aims to reduce the likelihood of accused people re-offending by assisting them to access appropriate support services. An accused person must agree to be involved in CISP before a referral can be made. CISP provides support for eligible accused adults on bail and coordinates referrals to:

* drug and alcohol treatment services;
* crisis and supported accommodation;
* disability and mental health services;
* acquired brain injury services;
* Koori specific services.

If assessed as suitable for CISP, an individual case management plan is developed for the person which outlines referrals and linkages to community treatment and support services. The CISP participant is assigned a case manager who meets regularly to help the person through the program, reviews their progress and provides progress reports to the judicial officer hearing the person’s case.

CISP can commence anytime between the accused person being charged until sentencing but is most frequently commenced upon the accused being granted bail. Accused persons are usually on CISP for about four months. They may be required to come before a judicial officer on a regular basis so check-ups can be made on the accused person's progress.

For further details – including a summary of the steps outlining how a referral into CISP can be made – see <https://www.mcv.vic.gov.au/find-support/bail-support-cisp>.

Commenting on the CISP program at Melbourne Magistrates’ Court in *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* (Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023) Coroner McGregor said at [346]-[349]:

[346] “Substance use disorder is a recognised diagnosable mental disorder. It is a condition that falls within the definition of ‘disability’ in s.4 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. However, drug use is criminalised and regarded as aggravating the risk of other, particularly low-level, offending. In the criminal justice system, therapeutic interventions are often coercive, with ‘non-compliance’ having the potential to contravene court orders and attract further criminal penalties. In short, drug dependence is not universally regarded as a health condition and the correctional system becomes a proxy for appropriate social service supports in the community.

[347] Mr Schumpeter tried to arrange a CISP assessment on 30/12/2019 to support an application for bail made by Veronica because, in his view, it would enhance the prospects of the application being successful. But CISP did not have capacity to conduct an assessment that evening.

[348] Many witnesses highlighted the shortage of drug and alcohol supports available to people applying for bail. Although the case management and referral support provided by CISP was acknowledged, the inquest also heard evidence that CISP is not always able to provide comprehensive services and secondary referrals for alcohol or drug dependence services are often not sufficiently timely. Secondary consultations for alcohol and drug treatment routinely take up to six to eight weeks.

[349] There is a clear link between a lack of available support or treatment for drug dependency and the remand of accused individuals with drug dependence. The Administration of Justice Conclave observed that in bail applications, substance use disorder is often used by the prosecution to allege that an accused presents an unacceptable risk and should be refused as occurred in Veronica’s case. Where bail supports are available, particularly where there is a supervisory component (as with CISP), an application for bail has much more force.”

As Coroner McGregor has suggested, acceptance into and participation in CISP is often central to the granting of bail to an accused. See e.g. the judgments of Lasry J in *Re Lawson Odlum* [2008] VSC 319 and Cavanough J in *Kylie Vickers* [2009] VSC 202.

### **9.5.17.2 Bail support program & service for children**

A significant difference between children and adults is the absence of a comprehensive state‑wide bail support program for children along the lines of the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) available for adults. Recommendation 130 of the Law Reform Commission Bail Reference (2007) was: “A child-specific bail support program should be established in the Children's Court. It should be developed and administered by CISP, but funded by DHS. Protocols for information sharing should be put in place between DHS and CISP to ensure an integrated service for children. As with the service in the Magistrates' Court, culturally appropriate support should be provided for Indigenous children." Budget funding bids for a state-wide bail support program have so far been unsuccessful. There are, however, two limited programs currently operating but not in every Children’s Court.

**(1) Koori Intensive Support Program**:

A pilot Koori Youth Bail Support Pilot Program commenced in July 2009. It was originally only available at Melbourne Children’s Court to a Koori youth who lived in the NW region of Melbourne and was subject to an opposed bail application.

The Koori Bail Support Program and the Koori Pre and Post Release Program were amalgamated in 2011 to form the Koori Intensive Support Program (KISP). The KISP Bail Support program aims to reduce the number of young Aboriginal offenders who are detained prior to a finding of guilt and/or prior to the completion of the sentencing process. The program provides intensive outreach support to assist young accused to comply with bail conditions or with conditions placed on deferred sentences. This support may address, for example, the issue of unacceptable risk by focussing on such issues as drug and alcohol counselling, mental health services, day programs, recreational programs etc.

KISP practitioners also provide court support for young Aboriginal people, as well as advice to courts. There are five KISP Practitioners, based in five of the DJR’s area youth justice teams: Dandenong, Geelong, Shepparton, Morwell and Preston.

**(2) Youth Justice Bail Support Service**

An Intensive Bail Support pilot program commenced in June 2010 to provide support to young men aged 15-18 who appeared at the Melbourne, Sunshine, Broadmeadows or Heidelberg Children’s Courts, who lived in the Department of Health & Human Services’ North and West metropolitan region and who were at immediate risk of remand. The objective of the pilot was to divert young people from remand and future involvement in the criminal justice system.

Following on the perceived success of this pilot program Youth Justice now provides two separate bail programs – **Supervised Bail** and **Intensive Bail** – for young persons who can meet their bail requirements with assistance but without assistance might otherwise be remanded in a youth remand centre.

**Supervised Bail** is the primary program. In the majority of cases where the court sets a bail condition that a young person is to participate in the Youth Justice Bail Support Service, this will be Supervised Bail. This program is targeted at young people who have had no previous contact with Youth Justice and are charged with a serious offence or who have been on supervised bail previously and have responded well. Supervised Bail is also available in the ‘dual track’ system under the *Sentencing Act 1991* for young persons aged 18-21.

**Intensive Bail** is a separate service that targets young persons who have been charged with serious offending and who have a frequent offending history but show a willingness to engage with intensive bail. This program provides more intensive intervention and more stringent supervision consistent with the identified levels of risk and aimed at young persons who require an intensive level of intervention to ensure they comply with their bail conditions. It also involves a high degree of participation in structured activity including after hours and on weekends. Intensive Bail is not available in the ‘dual track’ system under the *Sentencing Act 1991*.

**Referral process**: The young person’s legal representative or the Court may request Youth Justice to assess whether a young person is suitable for the Youth Justice Bail Service. Youth Justice will aim to undertake this assessment on the same day as the request which is usually the day the young person attends his/her bail hearing. Sometimes Youth Justice may request an adjournment for the assessment to be completed.

**Assessment process**: The Youth Justice Bail Service assesses the young person’s risk and protective factors that may impact on his/her ability to meet bail requirements. Information is collected on factors such as personal circumstances, previous offending, risks relating to non-compliance, needs and responsivity issues, risks to community safety, vulnerability on remand and the person’s attitude and willingness to engage with Youth Justice.

**Assessment outcome and Bail Support Plan**: Following assessment Youth Justice will provide a report to the Court which provides the outcome of the assessment including the factors that support bail compliance and factors that create risks for bail compliance. The report will also include recommendations and – where a young person is considered suitable – a Bail Plan outlining the interventions available to mitigate risks to bail compliance as well as a recommendation about whether the young person should participate in the **Supervised Bail** or **Intensive Bail** Service. Youth Justice can also provide advice where a young person has some identified risk factors for bail compliance but these can be mitigated without a bail condition requiring participation in a Youth Justice Bail Service. The Bail Plan for Intensive Bail will contain additional information about strategies to mitigate identified risks, a structured weekly timetable and an agreed course of action if there is non-compliance.

**Monitoring, enforcement and breach**: Victoria Police is responsible for applications to vary or revoke bail in the event that bail conditions are breached. Youth Justice monitors the young person’s compliance and participation with the requirements of the Bail program and notifies police about non-compliance with bail conditions.

In *Re PJ* [2024] VSC 97 – a case in which bail was granted to a 16 year Aboriginal youth – Incerti J detailed at [39]-[42] & [52] evidence given by a Youth Justice Advanced Case Manager, Ms J, of the difference between the Youth Justice Supervised and Intensive Bail Programs:

[39] “Ms J greatly assisted the Court in clarifying the difference between these programs. She indicated that Supervised Bail is directed at low or moderate risk assessed clients and provides a less rigorous program, whereas Intensive Bail is directed at applicants with a higher risk of non-compliance and requires a structured 25 hours of engagement each week.

[40] Ms Johnson explained that, despite the gravity of the offending, the applicant was considered unsuitable for an Intensive Bail Program out of concern that he would be overwhelmed and unable to complete the 25 hours of activities required each week. This concern was in part prompted by the applicant’s cognitive deficits and neurodiversity, as well as his previous struggles with engagement in the Supervised Bail Program, when he was only required to attend three appointments per week.

[41] In alternatively considering the applicant for a Supervised Bail Program, the YJ Report notes several factors weighing against recommending such a course of action. First, the applicant has previously been subject to such an order and continued to offend. Second, the applicant has proven unmotivated to cease his engagement with high-risk behaviour and has not provided consent to facilitate referrals to other services.

[42] However, at the hearing, Ms J accepted that the initial bail program was the applicant’s first substantive engagement with Youth Justice, and that the applicant had attended five of eight appointments whilst in the community. Ms J has seen a shift in the applicant since experiencing custody and the applicant has demonstrated an ability to engage in programs. Ms J expressed confidence that the applicant will attend sessions and engage better with services in the future, and has seen his engagement improve significantly while on remand. Ms J also noted that the applicant’s history demonstrates a tendency to engage better with services when there is a degree of court oversight.”

…

[52] “It was also conceded by Ms J that, considering the increased discussions regarding youth crime in the public discourse, Youth Justice has come under scrutiny and has adopted a more conservative approach in their assessments regarding suitability for bail. While I do not consider that this report was the product of an internal directive, it is a cause for concern if Youth Justice is considering public policy over the individual merits of a case.”

### **9.5.17.3 The dangers in detoxification by ‘drying out’ in custody**

In *Finding into Death with Inquest into the Passing of Veronica Nelson* (Coroner’s Court of Victoria, 30/01/2023) Coroner McGregor highlighted at [351]-[352] the dangers inherent in detoxification by ‘drying out’ in custody:

[351] “For people with drug dependence, short periods of imprisonment often exacerbate underlying causes of their drug use, disrupt any community supports in place and add to housing and employment difficulties. Any view that short periods in custody can be helpful to persons with drug dependencies so they can ‘dry out’ is misconceived (to say nothing of it being an improper use of remand). Withdrawal in this context is a “primitive form” of detoxification. Cells are generally not equipped to support people with complex health needs and the facilities available to women in prison custody, as will be seen, are not equivalent to those available to men.

[352] Judicial officers who preside over bail/remand hearings must have an appreciation of the dangers of withdrawal, especially from opiates, while in custody. Opiate withdrawal can be life threatening. Symptoms can be severe and withdrawal is particularly unsafe for individuals having comorbid conditions or whose underlying health is otherwise compromised. As will be discussed below, the treatment available for opiate withdrawal in custody may be insufficient to manage severe withdrawal. It is important that judicial officers understand this reality and thoroughly canvass and record custody management issues.”

