



MEDIA RELEASE

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RCV calls for “Eyes on Victoria” crime response

RCV has called on the State to ensure regional communities don’t become an organised crime blind spot following today’s announcement of the new “Eyes on the City” crime crackdown for metropolitan Melbourne.

RCV Deputy Chair Cr Michael Gobel, Mayor of Wodonga, said the same criminal behaviour impacting Melbourne is also a threat to regional Victoria.

“Organised crime does not stop at the Calder or the Princes Freeway,” Cr Gobel said.

Cr Gobel said RCV supported stronger investment in surveillance and crime prevention infrastructure, but warned any response limited to Melbourne risked creating blind spots across the rest of the state.

“You cannot run a statewide crime strategy with half the state left off the map. If criminals know the cameras stop at the metro boundary, what does that mean for regional businesses?” Cr Gobel said.

RCV member councils have raised growing concerns around threats associated with the illicit tobacco trade and related criminal activity, including intimidation, property damage and organised criminal behaviour extending well beyond metropolitan Melbourne.

Cr Gobel said regional Victoria should either receive its own dedicated “Eyes on our Regions” surveillance and safety program, or regional businesses should be eligible to apply for support through the Victorian Government’s new \$10 million Hospitality Security Fund.

“Regional Victorians pay taxes too. Their businesses help fund this program, so they deserve access to it,” Cr Gobel said.

“Crime doesn’t recognise postcodes and any government response to this crime wave shouldn’t either.”

RCV welcomed Victoria Police’s increasing focus on partnerships and safer communities under Chief Commissioner Mike Bush and said stronger collaboration between councils and police would be critical to tackling organised criminal activity across the state.

“We are encouraged by Victoria Police’s renewed focus on community partnerships and prevention. Regional cities stand ready to work alongside Victoria Police to strengthen local safety, improve intelligence sharing and help build more resilient communities,” Cr Gobel said.

“A camera network that only watches Melbourne is not a statewide solution – it’s a statewide vulnerability.”