



VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE TRIBUNAL

Chief Magistrate's Chambers  
Melbourne Magistrates' Court

**PRACTICE DIRECTION**  
**NO. 4/2003**  
**DIRECTIONS HEARINGS**

PRACTICE DIRECTION ISSUED PURSUANT TO SECTION 58  
OF THE VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE ACT 1996

Directions hearings are held for the purpose of making interlocutory and interim orders with respect to the preparation of a pending claim. The aim of the directions hearing is to ensure that the final hearing is heard expeditiously. Directions hearings are not held in all cases.

Directions hearings are commonly held when the following issues arise:

1. Cases are to proceed to a final hearing involving a person with a legitimate and/or substantial interest (including an alleged offender) as a party to the proceedings and/or where counsel to assist the Tribunal has been appointed.
2. Access is sought to classified documents contained on the VOCAT file or access to the VOCAT file is sought by a third party (see Practice direction 2/2003).
3. Complex applications including:
  - a. Applications for extension of time.
  - b. Delay in or non reporting of the act of violence to the police.
  - c. Pecuniary loss.
4. Adverse police material.
5. Claims which do not appear to disclose a relevant offence within the meaning of S3(1) of the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 1996*.
6. Cases which are poorly prepared including the failure to properly prepare and particularise the statement of claim.
7. The Tribunal will usually require that some or all, depending on the circumstances of the case, of the following final hearing listing information be provided at the Directions hearing:
  - a. The number of witnesses to be called.
  - b. The estimated length of the hearing.

- c. The need, if any, for the remote witness facility.
- d. Access to and exchange of documents.
- e. Identifying the facts in dispute between the parties.
- f. Identifying any other issues which may affect the conduct of the final hearing.
- g. The need if any for an interpreter.

**This Practice Direction has effect from 1 July 2003**

IAN LESLIE GRAY  
CHIEF MAGISTRATE

16 May 2003