



Private and Confidential

14 May 2025

Ongoing Advocacy on Behalf of the Private Investigation Industry

Dear Members and Non Members

I am writing to provide you with an important update regarding the ongoing efforts to protect the Private Investigation sector from the damaging impacts of the Private Security and County Court Amendment Act 2024.

As many of you are aware, I have had the privilege of representing our industry as a member of the Victorian Industry Advisory Council for over 14 years. During this time, and particularly over the last six years, I have been actively working to prevent these legislative changes from adversely affecting private investigators.

Since these proposals were first tabled around the end of 2018, I have held direct discussions and submitted formal objections to key decision makers including the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Justice, the Police Minister's Office, and the Licensing and Regulation Division (LRD). I have consistently challenged the direction being pushed by United Voice (the union largely responsible for orchestrating these changes) and have fought hard to ensure the unique operational realities of our profession are recognised and protected. During this time, I have also consistently pushed for the investigation industry to have a standalone classification so as to be exempt from changes such as these applied to the Security Industry.

For the past two years, as part of our commitment to keeping members informed and prepared, the ramifications of this legislation have been discussed at length in every AISP meeting.

At the beginning of 2024, once most of the drafting of the legislation was complete, I was able to get two legislated exemptions inserted relating to:

Section 136D (4) - Written consent from Client to approve the investigator.

Section 136E (4) – Written consent from Client to approve the investigator on short notice.

At this time, I was led to believe that all exemptions I put forward were going to be present in the final draft of the legislation. The following are the other requested exemptions put forward which were not inserted into the final draft:

Section 15A, (1) and (2) – All contractors have a business licence.

2. Section 136A, Subsections (1) – (4) – Risk Management Plans

3. Section 136B, Subsections (a), (b), and (c) – Equipment specified and Rapid Deployment

4. Section 136D, Subsections (1) and (2) – Investigator Identity Disclosure

As stated above, lobbying has been constant. At an AISP meeting late last year it was noted that one of our own members, Richard James, also raised these concerns directly with the Police Minister. The response was disingenuous at best, with the Police Minister stating they did not know Private Investigators were part of the security industry. We then discussed potentially getting the Shadow Police Minister involved, at which point we both sent correspondence to his office. The response from the Shadow Minister was that he was “passing the information on to the Police Minister.” As stated earlier, these are the same roadblocks we have been encountering with all government areas. Richard was; however, able to make contact with the leader of the Libertarian Party; Mr David Limbrick.

Mr Limbrick has actually raised questions within Parliament this week directed to the Police Minister, where he provided a background on the legislation, industry concerns the licencing burden, operational impacts and that the legislation is not fit for purpose. He has continued with the request that the Investigation Industry be exempt from the latest changes, as has continually been made to the Police Ministers Office over the last six years.

You can review the question at:

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/parliamentary-activity/questions-database/question-details/29538>

At this point in time, I still have further upcoming meetings with the Licencing and Regulation Division, Department of Justice and the Police Ministers office. I have confidence in the discussions I have held so far in 2025 with these departments, as there appears to have been a shift in thinking from the key stakeholders. I believe we will be able to obtain an agreement on amendments being passed through Parliament to allow for the Private Investigation Industry exemption.

Please rest assured that I along with the other members of the AISP committee, remain fully committed to this fight and will continue to advocate for the protection our profession. Your support and engagement make all the difference, and I will keep you informed of further developments as they arise.

Thank you for your continued trust and backing as we work to safeguard the integrity and viability of our industry.

Yours faithfully



Stephen Scahill
President