Statement

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Minister for Housing
Minister for Water
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VICTORIA
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STATEMENT FROM THE MINISTER FOR EQUALITY

Pride March is about Victoria's LBGTIQA+ communities coming together to be proud and to be visible.

We all understand the history of our marches, rooted in protest against discrimination and violence.

While that history is deeply important and should always be remembered, Pride is also a celebration – of our joy, our resilience and our defiance as queer people.

Part of what we celebrate is change and progress – where we have come from, and where we are going. We have achieved so much change in recent years and that includes significant changes to institutions that have caused us pain or harm in the past.

That is why I was incredibly disappointed to see the disgraceful behaviour by a small number of people directed against LGBTIQA+ members of Victoria Police who joined us at Pride March yesterday.

These VicPol members and staff showed up to be part of Pride alongside thousands of others and their courage in being proudly and openly themselves while serving others deserves recognition and respect.

I've spoken to Chief Commissioner Shane Patton and asked him to pass on my respect and support for those LGBTIQA+ police members and staff and to express my dismay about what they were subjected to.

Being an openly queer person is something that often requires a lot of practice and courage.

Many of us have faced rejection from our own families and many of us struggle with the weight of persistent shame. That's why it is vitally important that our chosen families – and our broader LGBTIQA+ communities – embrace and support us and that we never feel unsafe, or ashamed, in settings like the Midsumma Pride March.

I hope that next year, at the 30th Pride March, we can walk with a shared determination to making and keeping all LGBTIQA+ people safe and respected.

And I hope that queer members of Victoria Police and their families will again march right alongside us.