

Friday, 22 May 2026

Capsicum spray class action lead plaintiff wins major award

Inner Melbourne Community Legal congratulates Jordan Brown for receiving this year's Victorian Civil Justice Award from the Australian Lawyers Alliance.

This is recognition of Mr Brown's courage and commitment as the lead plaintiff in a landmark class action against Victoria Police over their unlawful use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) foam.

Last December, the Victorian Supreme Court found in Mr Brown's favour after he took civil legal action against Victoria Police over their use of capsicum foam against him and other members of the public at a rally outside a mining conference in 2019.

The court decision was the culmination of a six-year pursuit of justice by Mr Brown, who suffered physical and psychological injury as a result of being sprayed at the International Mining and Resources Conference (IMARC) in Melbourne on 30 October 2019.

Her Honour Justice Harris awarded Mr Brown \$54,000 in damages.

Mr Brown pursued court action after his initial complaint to police resulted in no action being taken against the officers who sprayed him.

The class action was lodged in 2022 by the Police Accountability Project at Inner Melbourne Community Legal and law firm Phi Finney McDonald.

The Australian Lawyers Alliance praised Mr Brown for his "enormous courage and determination", and the hard work, commitment and perseverance he had shown in pursuing justice not only for himself, but anyone who took part in protest action.

Previous winners of the Victorian Civil Justice Award include a mix of individuals and organisations such as Victoria Legal Aid, Apryl Day, Lex Lasry AM, Julian McMahon AC SC, The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service, The Law and Advocacy Centre for Women and Flat Out.

Comments attributable to Michelle Reynolds, Director of Policy and Advocacy, the Police Accountability Project:

"We are proud of working alongside Jordan to hold Victoria Police to account over the unlawful actions of its officers and this award is further recognition of his doggedness to secure justice for himself and others.

"To act as lead plaintiff in such a significant class action took courage and determination and it is fitting to see Jordan receive further acknowledgement from the Australian Lawyers Alliance.



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Media Release

“This case would never have had to be heard in court if Victoria had an effective independent oversight body to investigate police misconduct.

“The use of weapons by police can cause significant harm. To ensure OC spray and other so-called less lethal weapons by Victoria Police are not misused there must be an independent Police Ombudsman.”

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