

# Media Release



Federation of  
Community Legal Centres  
VICTORIA

## **Legal group calls for independent inquiry into police response to Occupy Melbourne protest**

**24 October 2011**

The Victorian Federation of Community Legal Centres today called on the Office of Police Integrity to investigate allegations of excessive force in Friday's police response to the Occupy Melbourne protest.

"Legal observers at the protests have taken numerous statements from people alleging excessive police violence in response to the protests," said Federation Executive Officer Hugh de Kretser. "The use of capsicum spray in responding to an apparently peaceful protest situation is particularly concerning. Capsicum spray use is only justified where there is a real risk of serious injury and other less violent options won't work. Capsicum spray should never be used as punishment or to secure compliance."

The reports of capsicum spray use against the protesters follow criticism of Victoria Police in April this year for using capsicum spray on a disabled man in a refugee protest in Melbourne.

"The Office of Police Integrity should investigate the reports of excessive police violence and the tactics adopted by police in response to the protest," Mr de Kretser said.

**Further information:**

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