# Violent clashes erupt in Melbourne CBD during pro-trans and women's rights protests



Melbourne's central business district was the scene of violent clashes on Saturday morning as pro-trans activists confronted police and other members of the public during protests that led to two arrests and injuries to four police officers.

The unrest unfolded outside Parliament House, where a women's rights group known as Women's Voices Australia was holding a rally to challenge the Allan Government's proposed expansion of anti-vilification laws. The group argued that these laws threatened freedom of speech.

Counter-protesters, estimated at around 440 individuals, gathered to express pro-trans views, using drums and chanting loudly as they confronted the women's group. Some counter-protesters carried signs with slogans including "Cops kill queers, queers kill cops," "Vic Pol protects Nazis," and "Trans exclusionary radical fascists."

In preparation for possible confrontations, Victorian authorities deployed riot police around Parliament House and enforced a designated search area near the rally site. According to a Victoria Police spokesperson speaking to the Daily Mail Australia, officers were forced to form "multiple lines" to separate the opposing groups as tensions rose and missiles were thrown at police. The spokesperson did not specify which group was responsible for the missile-throwing.

Hostilities escalated when approximately 40 protestors began marching through nearby streets, blocking intersections with wooden pallets and swarming local businesses. This resulted in two arrests: a 37-year-old woman from Brunswick East was charged with unlawful assault and wilful damage, and a 41-year-old man from Footscray was charged with indictable assault of police.

Law enforcement also utilised water-filled barriers to physically separate the groups in an effort to prevent further violence. Shocking video footage captured several protesters engaging in physical altercations, including scenes where officers were visibly struggling as some protestors attempted to tear at their arms during arrests.

Among those involved was former Animal Justice Party MP Andy Meddick, who was filmed being shoved to the ground on Spring Street. Speaking to reporters afterwards, Meddick declared, "I want him arrested for assault." Prior to the incident, he had been seen carrying a transgender flag and was escorted from the steps of Parliament House.

The protests continued to spur heated confrontations beyond the immediate rally site. A group of young men vocally opposing trans rights followed the protestors to the lawn outside the State Library, shouting "f\*\*\* trans rights." This group was reportedly chased down Swanston Street and into an alleyway following another altercation, as reported by The Age.

Victoria Police conducted 38 searches during the event to remove face coverings and to check for weapons; no weapons were found. The search powers remained active in the area until 8pm, with officers continuing to review CCTV footage to ascertain if further offences had occurred or additional arrests were warranted.

A Victoria Police spokesperson told the Daily Mail Australia, "Victoria Police respects the right for people to protest peacefully however we have zero tolerance for those who threaten the safety of the community and police. Police will now review CCTV vision from the rally and will investigate any further offences detected."

The protests have highlighted deep divisions within the city regarding issues of gender rights, freedom of speech, and law enforcement, leading to a significant police response and ongoing investigations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

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* <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DI7dvgstOPF/> - Reports wild scenes of violence during Saturday's protests involving women's rights and pro-trans groups.
* <https://www.heraldsun.com.au/truecrimeaustralia/police-courts-victoria/womens-rights-ralliers-protrans-supporters-face-off-in-wild-protest-at-parliament-house/news-story/190cdb9531b106b04660a3e7aaca3994> - Details clashes outside Parliament House and involvement of women's rights and pro-trans protesters.
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* <https://www.heraldsun.com.au/truecrimeaustralia/police-courts-victoria/womens-rights-ralliers-protrans-supporters-face-off-in-wild-protest-at-parliament-house/news-story/190cdb9531b106b04660a3e7aaca3994> - Supports details about protest location, groups involved, and violent escalation at Parliament House.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14650103/Melbourne-CBD-protesters-trans-activists.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data