

Statement from a Victoria Police Acting Inspector involved in the interaction:

- As we travelled along Swanston Street just south of Collins Street, I noticed an elderly gent standing in the middle of the tram lines or close to with hands on his hips.
- I approached this male and asked him kindly to move from the middle of the road and take up a position to the side
- This male stated why does he have to move, and I reiterated that it was a WAR march and given the size of the crowd and current tensions within the group if he was targeted, I could not guarantee his safety.
- I advised the male if he did not move that I had specific powers to move him. At no time did I arrest this male or inform him he was under arrest.
- The male walked off and away from me as the crowd got closer and entered a shop.
- I followed some 10 to 20 seconds later to speak with the male who was now with a female. I wanted to explain the reasons for my request to move from the middle of the road as he did seem not to understand the gravity of what was heading towards him.
- At no stage did I tell him to take his hat off which had Australian flags on it nor did I threaten he would be arrested.
- The male was never told he was being arrested, I have no point of reference to his language when it comes to “inciting” as that was not the language I used. I simply tried to assist and diffuse the whole incident and create a safe space for the male and his partner, as I was the only member present at the time.
- Having worked in Melbourne CBD on the frontline for over 8 years and been part of many protests I am aware of my role and powers when it comes to this.
- The reasons this interaction was not recorded on any documents or notes was it was a simple standard interaction without any justification for it to become more complicated as it simply was not.