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Melbourne Police Nab Suspect in \$14,000 Alcohol Theft Spree

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— Categories: *Crime*



In a display of hands-on policing, members of Melbourne’s Bicycle Patrol, supported by the Melbourne West Neighbourhood Policing Team, apprehended a suspect believed responsible for a lengthy string of alcohol thefts in the city. The man, aged 33 and currently without a permanent residence, is accused of stealing 88 slabs (a slang term used in Australia for a case of beer or alcohol, typically 24 cans) of alcohol over the past six months, with a total estimated value nearing AUD 14,000.

The arrest took place in Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD) on the morning of Wednesday, July 16. Officers conducting a targeted operation allegedly witnessed the suspect enter a bottle shop on Spencer Street, select his usual item, and exit without paying, a pattern police believe he repeated nearly daily across multiple inner-city suburbs, including Docklands and Fitzroy.

Authorities estimate the man was stealing roughly two slabs a day, averaging about \$AUD 160 in retail value per visit. The scale and persistence of the alleged thefts raised concerns not only about the financial losses to small and independent retailers, but also the strain on police and judicial resources.

Following his arrest, the suspect was interviewed and formally charged with 130 counts of shop theft. He has been remanded in custody and is scheduled to appear at the Melbourne Magistrates Court on August 1.

This case highlights the challenges Melbourne's law enforcement continues to face under growing pressures from a soft-on-crime approach adopted by current authorities. While hardworking frontline officers remain committed to upholding public safety, they do so under policies that often appear to favor repeat offenders over victims and business owners.

With community safety and respect for the law increasingly at stake, it's clear many Australians are seeking not just more policing, but smarter, tougher policies that deter chronic offenders and restore confidence in the justice system.