

**- From -
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Wrongfully accused:
Jim Stambanis.

Arrest case compo

SUE HEWITT

A MELBOURNE man has been awarded substantial compensation after police allegedly verbally abused, embarrassed and swore at him.

The man suffered no physical injuries, but the stress of being wrongfully accused of a crime caused psychological damage so great the police settled the case out of court.

Legal sources estimate the man would have received more than \$100,000 in the confidential settlement because of the extent of his psychological distress and the effect it had on his business.

Jim Stambanis, 51, of Prahran, claims he has been tormented by the memory of police treatment of him since the incident five years ago.

Police accused him of stealing a boat and held him until they realised they had the wrong boat.

Mr Stambanis, a registered builder, had to employ someone to take over running parts of his business because he could not cope.

His lawyer, Lisa Treeby of Arnold Thomas Becker, said she was "disappointed" the Victorian Government, which was sued in the County Court as representing Victoria Police, took years to settle.