



VICTORIA POLICE

For further information contact:

*Victoria Police
Multicultural Advisory Unit*

9247 5233

A Whittlesea Police Service Area Initiative

Understanding the Kirpan



A Kirpan is one of 5 religious articles of faith (Kakars) worn externally by Sikh members who have undergone an initiation ceremony.

The Kirpan resembles a sword and varies in size. It is usually small and normally kept in a sheath attached to a strap and worn underneath clothing, near the waist. It is not usually visible.

The 5 articles include the Kesh (unshorn hair), Kanga (wooden comb), Kara (iron bangle), Kachhera (prescribed shorts – undergarment) and Kirpan. To neglect to wear one represents a lapse in religious practice.

Control of Weapons Act 1990

General Exemption Under Section 8B To Possess Swords

'The Governor in Council, under section 8B of the **Controls of Weapons Act 1990**, exempts from the operation of section 5(1) and section 5(1A) of the Control of Weapons Act 1990, in relation to Kirpans (swords), a person who is of a class of persons set out in an item in Column 1 of Table A, to the extent specified opposite that item in Column 2 of Table A:

Table A

Class of Persons Exempt (Column 1): A Sikh whose religious practices require the carrying and possession of a Kirpan (a specific type of sword).

Exemptions (Column 2): Bringing a Kirpan into Victoria, causing a Kirpan to be brought into or sent into Victoria, selling or purchasing a Kirpan, displaying or advertising a Kirpan for sale, possessing, using or carrying a Kirpan – for the purposes of the performance of duties associated with religious observance.'