

# The Courier

## Two men remanded over alleged Rokewood cannabis seize

Olivia Shying and Alicia Thomas

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Two Melbourne men charged with cultivating cannabis at a rural property near Ballarat have been remanded in custody.

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Luigi Selmanaj, 21, of Taylors Hill and 40-year-old Phuong Chau, of St Albans, were remanded in the Ballarat Magistrates Court on Thursday afternoon to re-appear before a magistrate next week.

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This follows earlier reports of the Ballarat Divisional Response Unit allegedly seizing 90 cannabis plants after a search warrant was executed at a Rokewood property on Wednesday evening

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Police allege the 90 plants were located in a hydroponic system with an electrical bypass to another property.

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Police arrested both males, who have been charged with cultivating cannabis, trafficking cannabis and theft of electricity, at the property.

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Representing Selmanaj, lawyer George Balot, told the court on Thursday his client's matters would proceed to a plea hearing on August 31.

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Asked about custody management issues he told the court Selmanaj had been in Australia for 10 years after leaving war-torn Kosovo and this was his first time in custody.

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Also representing Chau, Mr Balot said the matter would also need to be adjourned until next Wednesday so a Vietnamese interpreter could be made available for his client who did not speak English.

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No applications for bail were made.

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Both men were remanded to reappear in court on August 31.