



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

Pru Goward
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

MEDIA RELEASE

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SEXUAL CONSENT LAWS TO BE REVIEWED

A review of the sexual consent provisions in the *Crimes Act* will determine if the law needs to be amended to protect victims better, Attorney General Mark Speakman and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Pru Goward announced today.

Mr Speakman, in consultation with Ms Goward, last week asked the NSW Law Reform Commission to undertake the review.

Mr Speakman initiated the review after a young woman endured two trials and two appeals with no final resolution. The proceedings centred on the issues of consent and the accused's knowledge of whether the complainant consented, which the review will consider.

"This young woman's bravery in coming forward and sharing her story is commendable. The delay and uncertainty in this matter was unacceptable," Mr Speakman said.

"We can't legislate for respect, but we can examine whether the consent provisions in our *Crimes Act* require simplification and modernisation. Within the coming weeks I will recommend to the Governor the appointment of a Commissioner with criminal law expertise to lead this important review."

The review will consider sexual assault research and expert opinion, as well as community views, and developments in law, policy and practice in Australia and internationally.

Ms Goward said the review is the first priority action of the NSW Government's Sexual Assault Strategy because it is vital survivors feel confident the justice system is working effectively to keep them safe.

"I'm particularly pleased the Law Reform Commission will take into account the experiences of sexual assault survivors in the criminal justice system. The law of consent should protect vulnerable people from sexual assault and put offenders on notice," Ms Goward said.

"Reporting sexual assault and reliving the experience in court takes enormous courage, and I look forward to considering the recommendations of this review."

To make a submission, visit www.lawreform.justice.nsw.gov.au

MEDIA:

Damien Smith | Attorney General | 0417 788 947

Amy Dale | Minister Goward | 0418 910 598