



Brad Hazzard MP
Attorney General
Minister for Justice

Stuart Ayres MP
Minister for Police and
Emergency Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 8 October 2014

HIGH COURT GREEN LIGHT TO CONSORTING LAWS

Attorney General Brad Hazzard and Minister for Police and Emergency Services Stuart Ayres today welcomed the High Court's finding that NSW's anti-consorting laws are valid.

"The anti-consorting laws give police the powers they need to disrupt and dismantle criminal organisations, including outlaw motorcycle gangs," Mr Hazzard said.

"It is not surprising that criminals don't like the laws and wanted them overturned, but today's decision in the High Court ensures they are here to stay."

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has delivered laws that uphold our tough stance to protect the community," Mr Hazzard said.

"Labor, in comparison, had its declaration and control order laws struck out by the High Court in 2011."

The anti-consorting laws carry a maximum penalty of three years in jail for people who continue to associate with convicted offenders after receiving an official warning from police.

Three people charged under the laws challenged their validity and the case had been set to be heard by the NSW Court of Criminal Appeal. However, the hearing was put on hold last year to await the outcome of another High Court case dealing with a similar constitutional issue.

To ensure a faster resolution to the challenge, the NSW Government applied for the case to be heard directly by the High Court.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government was always confident these laws were sound and would hold up to intensive legal scrutiny in Australia's highest court," Mr Ayres said.

"The Government's decision to go straight to the High Court has paid off and has ensured these vital laws can continue to be used by police in appropriate cases.

"These laws help police dismantle bkie gangs", Mr Ayres concluded.

The High Court by majority upheld the validity of Section 93X of the Crime Act 1900, rejecting an argument that the anti-consorting laws were unconstitutional. The court also found that the laws were appropriate and served a legitimate purpose to prevent crime.

MEDIA: LEONIE LAMONT 0407591926 (AG HAZZARD)
SOPHIE ONIKUL 0428 596 319 (MIN AYRES)