



**Office of the Hon Gabrielle Upton MP**  
Attorney General

Ms Ronda Miller  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Miller

I write in relation to Report 1/55 of the Joint Select Committee on Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders - *Every Sentence Tells a Story*.

Please find enclosed the NSW Government's response to the Joint Select Committee

Yours sincerely,

**GABRIELLE UPTON MP**  
Attorney General

13/5/15

**NSW Government response to the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders, *Every Sentence Tells a Story – Report on Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders***

The Joint Select Committee (**Committee**) was appointed in August 2013 to inquire into whether current sentencing options for perpetrators of child sexual assault remain effective, and whether consistency in sentencing and public confidence in the judicial system could be improved through alternative sentencing options such as minimum mandatory sentencing and anti-androgenic medication.

The Government asked the Committee to inquire into sentencing options for child sexual assault offenders due to concern that offenders were receiving unduly lenient sentences.

The Committee published its report on 14 October 2014. The Committee made 29 recommendations relating to child sexual assault offences and sentencing; methods to improve transparency and consistency in sentencing; measures to better support victims of child sexual assault at trial; and improvement in the treatment and management of child sexual assault offenders.

The Government thanks the Committee for its work in producing this report. The Government is committed to the prevention of child sexual assault and appropriate punishments for those who commit these types of offences.

The Government fully endorses the underlying objectives of the Committee's recommendations, being to:

- protect children and deter future child abuse by sending a strong and clear message to perpetrators that sexual offences against children are unacceptable;
- protect child victims from the psychological stresses imposed by prolonged and complicated court proceedings;
- ensure the length and nature of sentences is commensurate with community expectations, based on the seriousness of the offence; and
- provide offenders with effective treatment and rehabilitation so as to prevent re-offending.

Consistent with the Committee's recommendations, the Government has already committed to:

- including additional child sexual offences in the Standard Non-Parole Period scheme;
- Increasing the maximum penalty for sexual intercourse with a child under 10 from 25 years imprisonment to life imprisonment;
- assisting victims of child sexual assault through the criminal trial process by piloting the use of children's champions, specialized judges and pre-recording of a child's testimony; and
- establishing a Taskforce to examine options for anti-libidinal medical treatment for sex offenders. The Taskforce will include representatives of victim groups, justice, health and police officials.

In addition, in 2014 the Government increased measures to strengthen supervision and management of high risk sex offenders who are subject to Extended Supervision Orders. Recently commenced amendments to the *Crimes (High Risk Offenders) Act 2006* give a statutory basis to the existing High Risk Offenders Committee. These amendments promote the Committee's policy objectives of ensuring this category of offenders receive appropriate treatment and rehabilitation both in custodial and community settings.

The work of the Committee will continue to inform Government policies and initiatives that aim to protect children, improve victim experience of criminal proceedings, prevent child abuse, punish offenders appropriately and provide access to effective treatment and rehabilitation to make communities safer.