



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE

MEDIA RELEASE

SERIOUS INVASIONS OF PRIVACY IN NEW SOUTH WALES – HOW ADEQUATE ARE OUR REMEDIES?

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6 July 2015

Invasions of privacy are becoming increasingly common with the rapid growth of social media and surveillance and communication technologies.

An Upper House inquiry has been established to examine whether the existing remedies for serious invasions of privacy in New South Wales are adequate. The inquiry will be conducted by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice.

Committee Chair, the Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC, said: ‘The proliferation of social media has meant that invasions of privacy through online forums, such as the alarming trend of jilted lovers posting sexually explicit photographs of ex-partners on the internet, has immediate and vast reaching repercussions.’

‘Privacy is also being impacted by other new technologies, such as increasingly affordable surveillance drones which fly overhead and can film people in their backyards and on private property.’

Invasion of privacy has been an ongoing issue which was considered by the NSW Law Reform Commission in 2009 in its ‘Invasion of Privacy’ report, and by the Australian Law Reform Commission in 2014 in its ‘Serious Invasions of Privacy in the Digital Era’ report.

‘Both of those reports considered the need for a cause of action for breaches of privacy,’ said Mrs Maclaren-Jones. ‘There have also been recent inquiries into privacy law in other jurisdictions such as Victoria and South Australia.’

‘Our committee will specifically consider whether there is a need for a statutory cause of action, or whether existing remedies – including the equitable action of breach of confidence – are adequate.’

The closing date for submissions is Friday 4 September 2015. The committee intends to hold public hearings later this year.

For further information about the inquiry, including its terms of reference, or for more information on how to make a submission, please go to our website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice, or call the committee secretariat on (02) 9230 3504.

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For further information please contact Committee Chair, Mrs Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC, on 9230 2836.