

1 February 2005



**Legislative Council
Standing Committee on Law and Justice**

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES
INQUIRY INTO COMMUNITY BASED SENTENCING
OPTIONS FOR RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS AND
DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS**

NSW Parliament's Standing Committee on Law and Justice has launched an inquiry into community based sentencing options for rural and remote areas and disadvantaged populations in New South Wales.

The Law and Justice Committee has been asked by the Attorney General to inquire into whether it is appropriate and in the public interest to tailor community based sentencing options for rural and remote areas in NSW and for disadvantaged populations.

The Committee has also been asked to address a number of specific issues, including the impact of the availability of community based sentencing options upon rural and remote communities.

The Committee is now calling for submissions to this inquiry. The closing date for written submissions is Friday 11 March 2005. The Committee's final report is due to be tabled by 31 July 2005.

"Community based sentencing options currently available in NSW include good behaviour bonds, community service orders, intensive supervision programs linked to the Drug Court of NSW and the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court of NSW, periodic detention and home detention," the Chair of the Law and Justice Committee, the Hon Christine Robertson MLC, said.

Ms Robertson said, "Although there has been an increase in the availability and use of community based sentencing options in New South Wales and in other jurisdictions in recent years, currently, community based sentencing options are not uniformly available throughout country New South Wales."

Ms Robertson said, "Factors such as the needs of rural and remote areas and the needs of disadvantaged groups would have to be balanced against the technical and cost issues of wider provision of these community based sentencing options."

Further information about the scope of the inquiry including a discussion paper raising a number of issues for consideration can be obtained from the Committee Secretariat on tel (02) 9230 3311, fax (02) 9230 3371, e-mail: lawandjustice@parliament.nsw.gov.au or website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice.

*For further comment please contact the Hon Christine Robertson MLC,
Committee Chair, on 0428674310 or 9230 3044*