

13 July 2009



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

**LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES
INQUIRY INTO THE USE OF VICTIMS' DNA**

The NSW Attorney General, the Hon John Hatzistergos MLC, has asked the NSW Parliament's Standing Committee on Law and Justice to conduct an inquiry into the use of DNA material belonging to victims of crime.

Committee Chair, the Hon Christine Robertson MLC said, "This inquiry will examine the adequacy of current policies, procedures and practices to protect DNA material that belongs to victims of crime being used, for example, to cross reference DNA samples collected at other crime scenes."

"The Committee will carefully consider whether further restrictions on the use of DNA material would be appropriate or desirable. This includes the consideration of legislative restrictions for the use of victims' DNA" said Ms Robertson.

Ms Robertson explained that, "Victims' DNA is not usually placed on the DNA database, however, where DNA samples are collected at a crime scene and it is not possible to distinguish victim DNA from perpetrator DNA, a victim's DNA profile may be placed on the DNA database and matched against profiles from another crime scene where they possibly may have been an offender. The Committee will consider this issue, including what can and cannot be done with this resulting information."

"We are keen to find a solution that meets community expectations and finds the appropriate balance between the rights of victims and the needs of law enforcement", Ms Robertson said. "We are inviting submissions addressing the terms of reference, which are due by Wednesday 26 August 2009, and expect to hold public hearings in late September."

Submissions can be submitted via email to: lawandjustice@parliament.nsw.gov.au or faxed to (02) 9230 3416 or mailed to:

The Director
Standing Committee on Law and Justice,
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000.

The terms of reference for the inquiry and information about making a submission can be obtained from the Committee Secretariat on (02) 9230 2976 or via the Committee's website at: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice .

*For further comment please contact the Hon Christine Robertson MLC,
Committee Chair, on 0428674310 or 9230 2971*