



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AND JUSTICE

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **NEW 'LIFER' CLASSIFICATION RECOMMENDED FOR INMATES SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**4 April 2016**

The Law and Justice Committee has released its report into the security classification and management of inmates sentenced to life imprisonment.

In July 2015 it became publicly known that some inmates sentenced to life imprisonment had been reclassified to a medium or minimum security level. This inquiry was established soon afterwards to consider how lifers should be classified and whether they should have access to rehabilitation programs.

'Due to considerable community unrest regarding this matter the committee has recommended the establishment of a new classification for lifers, as the current security classification system does not appear to be appropriate for these inmates. Inmates subject to this new 'lifer' classification will never be reclassified, and instead will be managed by the Serious Offenders Review Council which will make recommendations to the Commissioner for Corrective Services regarding placement within the correctional system based on an assessment of risks and needs', said Committee Chair, the Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC.

Mrs Maclaren-Jones stated: 'The committee also received evidence that the general public and victims have not been adequately informed and educated by Corrective Services about the correctional system. This led us to recommend that Corrective Services develop and action a comprehensive communication strategy to educate the public on the operation of the correctional system, and that it introduce a range of measures to improve communication with victims of lifers'.

Mrs Maclaren-Jones continued: 'Measures recommended to improve communication with victims of lifers include trialling an opt-out Victims Register, providing an information package to victims following sentencing, having staff from the register telephone or offer to meet with victims to explain the correctional system, and providing a form following sentencing that includes a list of matters that victims can nominate to receive updates about'.

For further information about the inquiry, or to view the committee's report, please visit our website: [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lawandjustice).

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