



Hon Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

COURT SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS UNDER REVIEW

The NSW Attorney General, Greg Smith SC, today announced an independent review of all NSW court support services for victims of crime.

Mr Smith said the review would also examine training, accreditation and the development of minimum standards for support services.

“Many victims are anxious and vulnerable when they come to court and it is vital that they are able to access high-quality support,” Mr Smith said.

“Up to a dozen different government and non-government support services are operating within our courts and many victims are confused about which one will best meet their needs.”

Mr Smith said the review would assess the quality of services available, identify any gaps or duplication and explore ways of improving court support for victims in line with the Charter of Victims’ Rights.

The Vice President of the Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL), Howard Brown, said the review could lead to a fairer distribution of services for victims.

“There is no doubt that some rural areas in NSW are lacking in adequate support services for victims and the review should be able to identify the areas in greatest need,” Mr Brown said.

Mr Brown said he hoped the review would increase public awareness of the services available.

“There are many kinds of support organisations operating in courts across NSW, from the volunteers who provide tea and biscuits to the highly skilled teams that look after victims of specific crimes such as domestic violence or sexual assault,” he said.

“We must make sure that victims are aware of the services on offer and increasing co-ordination between services will help ensure that no one falls through the cracks.”

The review will go out to tender and be completed by the end of year.