



**Troy Grant MP**  
Deputy Premier of NSW  
Minister for Justice and Police

**Pru Goward MP**  
Minister for Women  
Minister for the Prevention of  
Domestic Violence and  
Sexual Assault

**Gabrielle Upton MP**  
Attorney General

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Sunday 31 May 2015

### **POLICE, COURTS TO EASE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAUMA**

Domestic violence victims will be able to deliver their evidence via video in court for the first time, in an Australian first aimed at making the criminal justice system a less traumatic experience for victims.

The NSW Government today announced that from tomorrow (Monday 1 June 2015), the *Criminal Procedure Amendment (Domestic Violence Complainants) Act 2014* will come into force.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Justice and Police Troy Grant said that the changes coupled with improvements to police investigation procedures meant video evidence could be used for the first time as evidence in chief against a person charged with domestic violence offences. This did not occur in any other Australian jurisdiction.

“In NSW courts, video statements can replace written statements. This means victims will need to spend significantly less time reliving the trauma of their assault in court, in front of their assailants,” Mr Grant said.

“Police when called to a domestic violence scene will film the victim’s video statement professionally and sensitively, as soon as possible. This will create a strong, timely piece of visual evidence for the courts that will reduce the risks of victims getting pressured by assailants into changing their stories down the track.”

“The NSW Police Force is leading the nation in domestic violence investigation with a comprehensive officer training package being rolled out and 600 new video cameras distributed to frontline police to support domestic violence video evidence.”

The new Act requires the victim to consent to making a video statement.

NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione said the introduction of Domestic Violence Evidence in Chief (DVEC) will be a game-changer for the reporting of domestic and family violence.

“Never before has a victim of domestic abuse been able to articulate in court the detail and the raw emotion of an incident as clearly as when it happened. That is, until now,” he said.

“Potentially, DVEC will ensure victims and police spend less time in court, reduced risk of a victim being intimidated to change or withdraw evidence, and most importantly, saves a victim and their family having to relive the violence.”

“This isn’t just about making our job easier – it is about changing the lives of people who suffer at the hand of someone they love and breaking the cycle of violence.”

Attorney General Gabrielle Upton welcomed the reforms that make accessing justice easier for victims of domestic violence.

“We know the court process can be a stressful, and at times a traumatic one for the victims of domestic violence. Our reforms will reduce the stress of the court process and potentially increase the number of early guilty pleas to domestic violence offences,” Ms Upton said.

“The reforms also include safeguards to prevent the improper use of the video statement.”

Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Pru Goward said that the roll-out represents part of a whole-of-Government push to reduce domestic violence and empower victims.

“Video-recorded statements will provide victims with greater confidence and support and the NSW Government is pursuing a range of other measures, including a Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, to protect victims and drive down domestic violence,” Ms Goward said.