



**COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP
AND
NEW SOUTH WALES ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HON VERITY FIRTH MP**

MEDIA RELEASE

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REVIEW OF LAWS TO PROTECT WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Commonwealth Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, and New South Wales Minister for Women and Acting Attorney-General, Verity Firth, today announced a joint investigation into the harmonisation of domestic violence and family law.

“The primary aim of this work will be to address inconsistencies so as to ensure women and children are better protected under both Commonwealth and State laws,” Mr McClelland said.

The report, to be conducted by the Australian and New South Wales Law Reform Commissions in consultation with other jurisdictions, will address inconsistencies in the interaction and application of Commonwealth and State laws regarding domestic violence, child protection, sexual assault and family law.

It will also examine ways in which laws can better protect women and children from domestic violence when a case crosses State boundaries and involves multiple jurisdictions.

Ms Firth said state Attorneys-General will also investigate the rollout of a national registration scheme for domestic violence orders.

“Some women move to another state to escape a violent relationship and are often unaware they need to re-register a violence order,” Ms Firth said.

The report, to be completed by July 2010, will form part of a National Action Plan to address violence against women and children.

This follows the ‘*Time for Action*’ report, by the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, which found that there was high level of complexity between Commonwealth and State laws that aim to protect women and children.

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