

Thursday, 18 October 2007

PAEDOPHILE REGISTER COMES IN TO FORCE

Attorney-General Michael Atkinson says South Australia's paedophile register will come into operation from today, giving police a powerful new tool to monitor child sex offenders.

Under the *Child Sex Offenders Registration Act*, police will have access to information about where offenders live, what car they drive, where they work, if they change their appearance in anyway and if they are affiliated to any clubs with child membership.

They will also have to inform police if any of these circumstances change.

Mr Atkinson says that some people have criticised this legislation as draconian.

"I make no apology preventing the sordid activities of these offenders. The protection of children is my paramount concern."

Offenders will be placed on the register for 15 years for Class 1 offences which include:

- Murder of a child occurring in the course of sexual intercourse or indecent assault of a child;
- Rape of a child;
- Unlawful sexual intercourse;
- Kidnapping;
- Incest; and
- Persistent sexual abuse of a child.

Offenders will be placed on the register for 8 years for Class 2 offences which include:

- Indecent assault of a child;
- Procuring sexual intercourse with a child;
- Production or dissemination of child pornography; and
- Possession of child pornography.

Mr Atkinson says the register will operate retrospectively, capturing those already convicted.

"Offenders can also be placed on the register at the discretion of the courts, and, if a paedophile is convicted of an offence in an overseas jurisdiction, they will also be placed on the register.

The Attorney-General warned that any offenders already registered under a Class 1 offence and who commits any repeat offence, whether it be Class 1 or Class 2, will be put on the register for life.

The South Australian register will be also be part of a national database.

“No longer will paedophiles be able to move freely between States safe in the knowledge that their past will not catch up with them.”

The Rann Government is pledged to deliver a safer community to the people of South Australia and to protect the safety of children.

Since coming to office in 2002 we have:

- Increased child pornography maximum penalties five-fold;
- Made it an offence to procure and groom a child to engage in sexual acts;
- Criminalised the filming of a child for prurient purposes regardless of consent;
- Significantly increased the funding of SAPOL’s paedophile task force following the removal of the statute of limitations that prevents sex offenders from being prosecuted for offences that occurred before December 1982; and
- Given courts the power to classify and deal with a child sex offender as a serious repeat offender after two offences.