

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**  
Attorney-General  
Minister for Racing



Wednesday, 9 November, 2016

## REVIEW OF SUPPRESSION ORDER LAWS

The Andrews Labor Government will review the laws relating to suppression orders which prevent the media from reporting on some court proceedings.

Attorney General Martin Pakula has appointed former Supreme Court of Appeal Judge Frank Vincent to review the *Open Courts Act 2013* and consider whether it strikes the right balance between people's privacy, fair court proceedings and the public's right to know.

Justice Vincent, who retired from the bench in 2009, will investigate whether there should be overarching consistent principles relating to suppression and prohibition orders.

The review will examine:

- the notice requirements and their impact on the rights of parties and the media to be heard when applications for suppression orders are made
- whether existing grounds for making a proceeding suppression order are adequate for the wide variety of matters that come before courts
- whether requirements that suppression orders clearly specify the information to be suppressed are operating effectively
- whether requirements that suppression orders operate only as long as necessary are being upheld

It will also review existing provisions under the *Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) Act 2009*, which currently makes it an offence to publish any evidence or content of any report put before the court.

The review will consider what might be an appropriate balance between preserving the privacy of a person on a post-sentence supervision order and the public's right to know the details of those proceedings.

Justice Vincent will consult with courts, police and the media as part of the review and will report back to Government next year.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

*"We want to make sure the laws relating to suppression orders are working effectively and protecting the public's right to information."*

*"Suppression orders should only be used in limited circumstances and this review will help us identify whether any improvements or changes are needed."*

*"Justice Vincent is a highly experienced former judge who will consider the delicate balance between a person's right to privacy, protecting court processes, and the public's right to know."*