

# News releases - John Rau

## Stronger laws to protect children from exploitation

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People who administer websites that disseminate or stream child exploitation material could face up to ten years in jail under new laws introduced by the State Government.

The *Statutes Amendment (Child Exploitation and Encrypted Material) Bill 2017* will ensure both Police and the Courts are well-equipped to deal with matters involving the distribution of child exploitation material.

The legislation will create new offences covering the administration, establishment or operation of websites featuring child exploitation material.

Suspects and others can also be compelled to provide information or assistance that will enable authorities to access encrypted material or other computer material that is stored with restricted access that is reasonably suspected to be related to child sexual exploitation or other criminal activity.

### Background

Police are increasingly unable to gain access to ever more sophisticated encrypted and restricted records relating to child sexual exploitation and many other crimes.

The legislation will ensure that those who administer, establish or operate sites that feature child exploitation material can be prosecuted, even if they do not actually possess the material in question.

People found to be administering illicit websites could face up to ten years in jail.

Significantly, suspects could face up to five years in jail if they fail to comply with an order to provide information or assistance to access encrypted or restricted records.

A new 'cyber obstruction' offence will see offenders jailed for up to five years if an associate of the accused deletes encrypted records where a device has been seized and an order either has been – or is about to be made – requiring access.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General John Rau

The Government must do all we can to protect vulnerable individuals from sexual exploitation and abuse.

These changes will ensure that people who seek to exploit or abuse children for the sexual gratification of others are held to account for their appalling actions.

It will enable people who administer or manage these websites, who may not necessarily be in possession of the material itself, to be punished.

### **Quotes attributable to Police Minister Chris Picton**

These laws will help Police keep pace with constantly evolving nature of technology and new forms of offending.

The changes will ensure we can prosecute those abhorrent individuals and online groups who administer sites that actively encourage the abuse of children.