

Media Release

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Minister for Justice and Customs
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National register launched to track child sex offenders

A national register to track child sex offenders, and others who commit serious offences against children, will be operational Australia-wide within months, the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Chris Ellison, said today.

Launching the Australian National Child Offender Register (ANCOR) in Canberra today, Senator Ellison said under the register anyone convicted of sexual or other serious offences against children will be legally obliged to notify police of their address, places they frequent, car registration and other personal details.

“This information will be collated and given to State and Territory police to ensure that authorities can better protect the community by knowing the location and movement of convicted offenders,” he said.

“I am also pleased to announce that \$713,333 will be provided by the Howard Government to assist in the funding of this register. Fittingly, this funding will be provided under the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002*.

“ANCOR is a great example of how the Commonwealth and States can succeed when they work together for a common goal – in this case, the protection of Australian children.

“This project has been given high priority since it was first outlined to the Australasian Police Ministers Council by the CrimTrac Agency in November 2003 and has subsequently been pursued with vigour.

“This system will be an efficient nationwide offender case-management tool for police, which will enhance strategic alliances and collaborative partnerships by improving communication and co-ordination between jurisdictions.”

Under ANCOR, people convicted of sexual or other serious offences against children will be required to register with police and provide details such as club memberships and even travel plans.

It is a police-only information tool to which only designated officers will have access. Data holdings will not be released to any other outside bodies.

All states and territories have either passed or will soon pass legislation based on a common model. Northern Territory, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania are likely to have passed legislation this year, while the ACT and South Australia should do so early next year.

New South Wales has legislation and is making amendments in line with the common model. Queensland also has legislation.

“The Australian Federal Police (AFP) will manage incoming and outgoing movement-reporting requirements to boost the Howard Government’s commitment to combating international child-sex tourism,” Senator Ellison said.

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