



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Justice & Customs

Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone
Senator for South Australia

Wednesday 21 July 1999

CrimTrac - technology to fight crime

Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Amanda Vanstone, today released the tender for CrimTrac, a state of the art national crime investigation system which will help police catch and prosecute more criminals.

"The Federal Government has committed \$50 million to establish CrimTrac, to give Australia's police services the capacity to use leading edge technology to fight crime," Senator Vanstone said.

"CrimTrac will move Australian policing into the 21st century.

"Through CrimTrac, police will be able to identify suspects earlier and clear innocent people faster. Police will be able to arrest offenders more quickly and identify repeat offenders more easily. CrimTrac will also allow police to clear some unsolved crimes, including serious crimes dating back years.

"CrimTrac is an information system that will give police speedy access to operational information such as Domestic Violence Orders, criminal records and missing persons information.

"CrimTrac includes a new automated fingerprint identification system, a new national DNA database, and a new national child sex offender register.

"Australia's current fingerprint system has been in place since 1986, and will run out of capacity in 2001. It relies on printers ink technology scarcely changed in one hundred years.

"CrimTrac's new fingerprint system will support 'livescan,' an inkless process that uses electronic and laser technology to produce clear, undistorted fingerprint records which can then be entered into the national database.

"The DNA database will help Australia's police services make best use of the greatest breakthrough in police investigation techniques since the development of fingerprint science in the nineteenth century.

"CrimTrac will also include a national Child Sex Offender register, so that police around the country are able to protect children at risk.

"CrimTrac will mean that police officers in the smallest outback town or the heart of a capital city can get fast access to the information they need to fight crime, wherever it occurs.

"The Federal Government will ensure high levels of security for information accessed through CrimTrac, for people working on the system and for officers using it.

"CrimTrac's operations will be subject to a comprehensive range of legal and technical safeguards to guard the security of data and to protect the privacy of individuals.

"I am delighted to say that this Federal Government initiative has the support of all the States and Territories. We are working closely with all Australian police services to make sure that CrimTrac's design meets their needs.

"The Government has consulted closely with industry on the development of CrimTrac and will look to industry for innovative solutions to the CrimTrac tender.

