



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Justice & Customs

Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone
Senator for South Australia

28th January 2000

Law enforcement leaps into the new millennium with CrimTrac

Australia's police services are leaping into the 21st century with the signing of a \$14.8 million contract to replace the current National Automated Fingerprinting Identification System, the Minister for Justice and Customs, Senator Amanda Vanstone, announced today.

"A French company, SAGEM, will provide the first element of CrimTrac, a new national information system for police," Senator Vanstone said.

"SAGEM's technology will give all Australian police services better access to an enhanced national database of fingerprints to help catch criminals.

"This will give Australia the largest palm print identification system in the world, adding the ability to take palm prints and store repeat offender prints.

"With CrimTrac we are moving from an era when fingerprinting was done with ink pads, in black and white, to a future where fingerprints will be collected completely electronically in 256 shades of grey, increasing the ability to identify criminals.

"Existing fingerprint data will be enhanced by the new SAGEM technology. We are actually hoping that by adding access to palm prints it is possible that we will get hits on unsolved crimes when we switch on the new technology.

"The new system employs international standards which will enable Australia's police services to potentially link with overseas police fingerprinting agencies in the future.

"CrimTrac is on track. Through the Federal Government's \$50 million commitment Australia's police services will be able to use technological advances to fight crime.

"Each State and Territory should have access to the new system by the end of this year. This is a very good start for CrimTrac and should send a very firm message to criminals.

CrimTrac - National Information System for Police

CrimTrac is a Federal Government initiative, supported by all States and Territories, to give police access to an unprecedented level of information to help solve crime.

CrimTrac's technology will give Australia's police access to; a new and enhanced Automated Fingerprint Identification System; a new national DNA database; a national Child Sex Offender register and fast access to operational information including domestic violence orders, person warnings and stolen vehicle information.

By linking police information across the country, CrimTrac will significantly increase the number of criminals identified and prosecuted. It will allow police officers in the tiniest outback town or the heart of a capital city to get the information they need, when they need it.

Using CrimTrac police will be able to identify suspects earlier, clear innocent people faster and arrest offenders quicker. It will also identify repeat offenders more easily and clear unsolved crimes including serious offences.

CrimTrac will be developed in stages with the first element coming on line by the end of this year.

SAGEM - supplier of Australia's new Automated Fingerprint Identification System

SAGEM is a French based high technology group and has consolidated sales of more than 3 billion US dollars. SAGEM's biometric identification and fingerprint matching technology is used in a variety of security applications worldwide, including law enforcement, document security, and national defence.

SAGEM's primary product is the Morpho automated fingerprint identification system, used in a variety of security applications worldwide.

SAGEM was selected, along with Lockheed Martin, to supply the FBI with its new automated fingerprint identification system. More than 140 agencies, around the world, use the SAGEM automated fingerprint identification system for fraud prevention and crime solving as well as document security and national defence.