



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC  
Attorney General  
Minister for Citizenship  
Minister for Regulatory Reform**

Embargoed until 5am Thursday 1 July 2010

### **NSW Relationships Register up and running**

As of today, unmarried couples will be able to formally prove they are in committed or de facto relationships with the establishment of the NSW Government's Relationships Register.

NSW Attorney General, John Hatzistergos launched the Register today, saying it will make it easier for unmarried couples to access government services, legal entitlements or records.

It will also provide unmarried heterosexual and same-sex couples with a simple and dignified mechanism to have their relationships recorded and respected.

"Previous laws made it difficult for couples who are in de-facto or committed relationships to prove their relationship for the purpose of obtaining necessary documents," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"Couples who choose to register their relationship will now be provided with one document that helps prove their relationship sparing them the frustration of constantly having to supply agencies with large amounts of paperwork," he said.

The NSW Government welcomes the Commonwealth Government's cooperation to implement complementary amendments to Commonwealth regulations, which also commence today. These will enable couples registered under the NSW scheme to be recognised as de facto couples under a wide range of Commonwealth laws including taxation, social security, health, aged care and superannuation laws.

Mr Hatzistergos said the Relationships Register will not provide for civil unions, but will reflect the serious commitment made by couples who choose to register their relationship.

"Couples will need to be able to prove they are eligible to be included on the Register and can have the registration terminated if the relationship dissolves," he said.

To be eligible to register a relationship on the Relationships Register in NSW:

- Couples must be in a committed, exclusive relationship;
- Couples must not be married or in another relationship that is registered or registrable
- Couples must be 18 years of age or older; and
- One person must be a resident of NSW.

Mr Hatzistergos said that in establishing the Relationships Register the Government has also amended legislation allowing registered relationships to be considered on par with de facto relationships under NSW law.

"Relationships registered in other states and territories will be recognised under NSW laws.

"The ACT has recognised relationships registered in NSW. The Government is also working to ensure there is reciprocal recognition in other jurisdictions that have registers in place," Mr Hatzistergos said.

The NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages is managing the Register. To inquire about the register, please contact Manager, Registration Development Services on (02) 9035 6545 or visit [www.bdm.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au)