



# MEDIA RELEASE

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC  
Attorney General  
Minister for Industrial Relations

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Monday November 16, 2009

## FORUM ON CRIME AND SENTENCING COMES TO WOLLONGONG

A free public education forum about crime and how criminals are sentenced will be held in Wollongong on Monday, November 16, NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

“NSW has the strongest sentencing regime in Australia, yet there are many misconceptions in the community about how the justice system operates,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

“The forum will give the Wollongong community a chance to hear first hand accounts of how sentences are determined from a panel of experts that will include a former judge.”

The forum is in response to a survey by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) and the NSW Sentencing Council which found many people were interested in knowing more about the NSW justice system.

Over the past seven months, forums have been held in Parramatta, Campbelltown and Gosford, with each event attracting strong community interest.

“A record 115 people attended the most recent forum in Gosford, with more than 70 per cent of guests saying that the session had given them a better understanding of how the justice system works,” Mr Hatzistergos said.

Guest panelists at the Wollongong forum will include:

- NSW Attorney General, John Hatzistergos
- The Hon James Wood AO QC, former Supreme Court Judge, Chair of the NSW Law Reform Commission and member of the NSW Sentencing Council
- Howard Brown from the Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL)
- Brendan Thomas, Assistant Director General, Crime Prevention and Community Program, Department of Justice & Attorney General.

Noreen Hay Member for Wollongong will open the forum, which will include a short presentation followed by a questions and answers session led by a moderator.

“The process of sentencing involves a range of considerations, including the need for punishment, deterrence, community protection and rehabilitation,” Ms Hay said. “It is important that our community understands the process so that they can make up their own minds about whether the sentence fits the crime.”

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research found people well informed about how the criminal justice system operates are more likely to have confidence in it.

The Wollongong ‘Process of Justice’ Public Forum will be held at:

Venue: City Beach Function Centre, Marine Drive, Wollongong

When: Monday November 16, 5.30pm – 7.30pm  
(Refreshments and registration from 5.00pm)

Registration: [communications@agd.nsw.gov.au](mailto:communications@agd.nsw.gov.au)

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