



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary inquiry into a better family law system to support and protect those affected by family violence

Issue date: 29 May 2017

Family violence and the family law system: public hearings commence in Canberra

The federal parliamentary committee examining family violence law reform will hold its first public hearing in Canberra tomorrow.

The Law Council of Australia will appear before the committee to discuss key aspects of the inquiry's terms of reference, including whether the federal family law system:

- responds as quickly as possible to family violence;
- considers the financial needs of people affected by family violence;
- ensures family law professionals have sufficient capacity to respond to cases involving family violence; and
- considers how protection orders are coordinated effectively across jurisdictions.

In launching the Committee's program of public hearings for the inquiry, Committee Chair, Sarah Henderson MP said that "family violence has been a very significant issue for the Australian community, and our committee will be looking at whether the family law system can be improved to ensure that decisions are made to better support and protect those affected by family violence."

Ms Henderson noted that the Committee had already received over 80 submissions and many more letters from individuals. The Committee had also received over 2,800 responses to its anonymous questionnaire.

Over the coming weeks, the Committee will hold further public hearings with the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, the Department of Social Services, the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia. Details will soon be available on the inquiry's website at www.aph.gov.au/fvlawreform. The Committee will also hear 3 minute community statements from members of the public in coming weeks.

The Committee has extended the closing date for persons wishing to complete the anonymous online questionnaire to **31 August 2017**.

Public hearing details: Tuesday 30 May 2017 from 4.45pm – 5.30pm in Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra.

Audio of the hearing will be broadcast live at aph.gov.au/live



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Media enquiries:

Office of Ms Sarah Henderson MP, Committee Chair on (03) 5243 1444.

For background information:

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Interested members of the public may wish to track the committee via the website at www.aph.gov.au/fvlawreform. Click on the blue 'Track Committee' button in the bottom right hand corner and use the forms to login to My Parliament or to register for a My Parliament account.

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