

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



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## VICTORIAN COMMUNITY TO HAVE ITS SAY ON SENTENCING

In an Australian first, the Andrews Labor Government will move to create a Sentencing Guidelines Council to engage with the community and provide guidance to the courts on sentencing for specific crimes.

The Victorian model will be based on the highly successful sentencing councils in the United Kingdom and will be made up of judges and magistrates, victims of crime representatives, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Victoria Police, legal stakeholders and academia.

It is intended that the Victorian Sentencing Guidelines Council will develop sentencing guidance for the courts, after engaging in wide consultation with the Victorian community.

In the UK, the primary role of the Sentencing Council of England and Wales is to research and develop sentencing guidelines for particular offences after engaging in broad consultation with experts and the public. Once developed, those guidelines have a binding effect on the lower courts.

The Sentencing Advisory Council's report, *Sentencing Guidance in Victoria*, stated that the establishment of a Victorian Sentencing Guidelines Council should be given further consideration.

The Sentencing Advisory Council suggested that an independent council, comprised of judicial and non-judicial members, could provide comprehensive and methodical guidance to sentencing courts.

The Government will undertake further work to determine exactly how the Victorian Sentencing Guidelines Council will operate in practice. The Sentencing Advisory Council will lead extensive consultation with the judiciary and the Victorian community on this proposal later this year.

The Government intends to introduce legislation to establish the council in 2018.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"For the first time in Australia, the community will be given the chance to help shape our sentencing practices and provide guidance to the courts."*

*"Creating the Sentencing Guidelines Council is about ensuring sentences better meet community expectations."*

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

*"The Sentencing Guidelines Council will be the first of its kind in Australia. It will create sentencing guidelines for specific offences and improve community confidence in our justice system."*

*"Importantly, it will give the community the opportunity to have a say in sentencing in Victoria."*