

SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME

Sunday 15 March 2015

Victims of crime whose claims were caught in the transition between the old Victims Compensation Scheme and the new Victims Support Scheme will be eligible to have their claims re-assessed, Premier Mike Baird and Attorney General Brad Hazzard announced today.

“The improvements we made to the scheme in 2013 meant that victims got the support they needed within 30 days, rather than having to wait 31 months under the old scheme,” Mr Baird said.

“However, we have listened to the concerns raised by victims, and victims’ groups, about the transition from the old scheme to the new scheme.

“As more recent cases have been brought to our attention, following the widely reported representations by Katrina Keshishian, it has become clear that the retrospective nature of the reforms has resulted in some serious inequities.

“I am not prepared to allow this – and if that means conceding that this particular aspect of our reforms was a mistake, so be it.

“We will make the appropriate changes — and, as a result of our strong financial management over the past four years, we have the Budget flexibility to fund those changes.”

Mr Hazzard said victims who suffered crimes prior to the 2013 legislative changes and had lodged claims under the old scheme will be able to apply for funds under the provisions of the former scheme as if no changes had been made.

“The 2013 scheme has ensured that all victims have access to far quicker counselling and payment of expenses, including medical bills, than was previously the case under the former Labor government,” Mr Hazzard said.

“The Government’s changes have worked well for the majority of victims but there is a group whose expectations under the former scheme were not realised.”

“A number of examples of unfairness have been brought to our attention and the Baird Government is being guided by the principles of care and compassion.”

Mike Baird MP
Premier of NSW

Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Western Sydney

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