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to the statement of

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Mr Geoff Provest MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Emergency Services

M110213

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31 JAN 2012

Dear AT

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon Michael Gallacher MLC, regarding the safety of children attending Outside School Hours Care programs. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

This Government is committed to protecting children, particularly from sexual exploitation and I note you have also directed your concerns in these matters to the Minister for Family and Community Services, the Hon Pru Goward MP, and to the Minister for Education, the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP.

While all police officers have a role in the protection of children, clear areas of responsibility have been established for the investigation of child abuse matters.

The NSW Police Force's Sex Crimes Squad provides a specialist adult sexual assault and child protection service to support Local Area Commands across the State. The Squad includes the Child Exploitation Internet Unit which investigates the sexual exploitation of children that may occur through the use of the internet and telecommunications systems.

The Unit conducts proactive and reactive investigations to identify persons using the internet to groom and procure children for sexual exploitation.

The other significant area of work for the Squad is the management of child sex offenders.

The Child Protection Registry manages convicted child sex offenders who are living in the community. These people are required to register at their local police station and provide police with their personal details as well as any travel plans and any children with whom they may have regular contact.

This information is stored on the NSW Child Protection Register as well as the Australian National Child Offenders Register.

The Child Protection Registry also coordinates the multi-agency Child Protection Watch Teams to manage persons on the Register who have been identified as posing a high risk of re-offending against children.

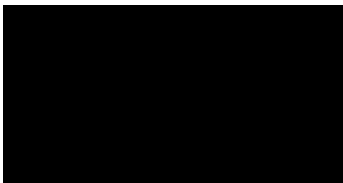
Police chair the eight branches that operate across NSW. Other agencies involved include, Corrective Services NSW, Community Services, Juvenile Justice NSW, Housing NSW and NSW Health. The Teams provide a formal structure to exchange information among agencies about high risk child sex offenders and provide an early warning system of inappropriate behaviours, associations, living arrangements and activities.

With respect to the concealment of offences against children by persons purporting to act under terms of confidentiality, section 316 of the *Crimes Act 1900* creates the offence of concealing a serious indictable offence.

A person may be criminally liable if he or she fails without reasonable excuse to bring information to the attention of police or other appropriate authority. This information is that which might be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of a person who is believed to have committed a serious indictable offence.

The *Crimes Regulation 2010* exempts certain professions and vocations from this provision of the Act, such as clergy, counsellors, medical practitioners but not teachers, except in cases of assaults at schools covered by section 60E of the *Crimes Act 1900*.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Provest MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Emergency Services