

Hon Annette King

Minister of Police



19 December 2007

Media Statement

Police supported with new Legislation

Legislation to better support and guide the work of police has been introduced to Parliament, Police Minister Annette King announced today.

Following almost two years of development and consultation, the Policing Bill paves the way for 21st century legislation to replace existing statute dating back to the 1950s.

Ms King said the Policing Bill represents a comprehensive modernisation of the main law relating to New Zealand Police.

"The Bill has two key objectives. First, it confirms and strengthens the legal arrangements for the way Police is organised and governed, with a clearer focus on the balance between independence and accountability. Second, it sets a platform for improving Police's effectiveness, especially by updating the approach to employment practices, and establishing a contemporary framework for the exercise of policing powers," Ms King said.

The tabling of the Bill follows a two-year review of current policing legislation by a working group, comprising representatives from relevant government agencies and independent bodies such as the Law Commission. The views of frontline police, as well as Police staff associations, were also fed into the Bill's preparation. Opportunities were also provided for all Parliamentary political parties to input to work on the new legislation.

Ms King added that provisions in the Bill have also been informed by several consultation rounds and public research on what sort of policing New Zealanders want and expect in the years to come.

"I want to build on the inclusive style that's been such a feature of this law reform project. Today's tabling of the new Bill in Parliament opens up another chance for people to have a say on how policing might best be enabled by legislation, and I encourage all New Zealanders to think about this issue, and to contribute their ideas".

"All New Zealanders have a stake in policing, and everyone stands to benefit if we can agree on the most effective form of legislation to support the work of New Zealand Police", Ms King said.

There will be a link through to the Policing Bill online at: www.policeact.govt.nz. Copies will also be available to view on the Parliamentary website.

Following its first reading early next year, the Policing Bill will be referred to the select committee where there will be an opportunity for the public and interest groups to make further submissions.

ENDS

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