



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOUGH PENALTIES FOR INCITING VIOLENCE NOW IN FORCE

Anyone who incites or threatens violence against people based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex or HIV/AIDS status in NSW will now face up to three years in prison, under new laws that came into force this week.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the laws were important for enhancing community safety.

“We are all entitled to express our views in NSW, but that doesn’t mean we have a licence to drum up violence against innocent people,” Mr Speakman said.

The legislation creates a new offence in the *Crimes Act* of publicly threatening or inciting violence against people on the grounds of race, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex or HIV/AIDS status.

“These laws will send a strong and clear message to people who think it’s acceptable to incite violence against people because they belong to a particular group,” Mr Speakman said.

The new offence in the *Crimes Act* carries a maximum three-year sentence and a fine of \$11,000, or \$55,000 in the case of a corporation. It replaces and improves existing offences in the *Anti-Discrimination Act*.

“Public conduct intended to incite hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule against multicultural and LGBTI communities and people with HIV/AIDS has been a crime in NSW for over 20 years, but no one has been prosecuted under the old laws,” Mr Speakman said.

“The new laws are clear and simple and will protect a broader range of vulnerable people including religious groups, who are not covered by the *Anti-Discrimination Act*.”

The laws follow extensive consultation with the Keep NSW Safe Coalition, religious leaders and community groups.

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