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PROTECTING SOUTH AUSTRALIANS FROM IDENTITY FRAUD

The Attorney-General Michael Atkinson has announced new hi-tech measures to protect South Australians from identity fraud.

“Birth, marriage and change of name certificates are amongst the primary sources of identification for South Australians,” Mr Atkinson said.

“These documents are needed to get a driver’s licence, passport, credit card or loan. Because of this, fraudsters and identity thieves are always trying to find new ways to alter or create these documents.

“From today, the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry will use new fraud-resistant paper for its certificates, designed to outwit cunning identity thieves,” Mr Atkinson said.

The Council of Australasian Registrars developed the new-generation paper that combines different hi-tech features to make certificates almost impossible to copy and make tampering easily detectable.

- 3-D watermark
- Security thread embedded in the paper
- Split-duct printing which makes counterfeiting difficult
- Thermochromic patch. This patch reacts to a change in temperate by disappearing and is impossible to photocopy.
- Intricate and multi-coloured fine line pattern including a kangaroo, the Southern Cross and the word ‘Australia’
- Chemical-sensitive ink. The ink dissolves or smudges if alteration is attempted.
- Invisible ink patterns
- Other covert and forensic features

“More than 600, 000 people fall prey to identity fraudsters each year.* The crime can cause more than just inconvenience. It can take years to recover from the crime - mentally and financially.

“Personal fraud costs Australians a billion dollars a year* and introducing security-enhanced paper is just one more measure the Rann Government is taking to stop this costly crime,” Mr Atkinson said.

In 2004 the Rann Government introduced a raft of nation-leading laws to combat identity theft. New offences were created targeting those who illegally possess and create identity documents.

The Rann Government is a signatory to the National Identity Security Strategy.

“My thanks to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry in S.A. for its work as part of the Strategy. It’s efforts are helping to protect South Australians from identity fraud,” Mr Atkinson said.

The B.D.M. Registry has strict policies to ensure that only people entitled to have certificates can get them. The Registry also offers government agencies and banks services to check the validity of documents.

South Australia is one of the first States to start using the new paper, which will be used in all jurisdictions by July.

* Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Fraud Survey 2007