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SECURITY INDUSTRY LAWS TO BE TIGHTENED

Attorney-General John Rau has announced moves to tighten the licensing and regulation of the security industry.

Mr Rau said South Australia's laws were already rigorous, but further measures were needed.

“In light of security threats and incidents in Australia and overseas, now more than ever we need to ensure the probity, competence and skills of security agents – particularly those who have access to firearms, critical infrastructure and licensed premises,” Mr Rau said.

“The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is working closely with the security industry to adopt a more nationally-consistent approach to regulating the private security sector. COAG has agreed to minimum standards including fingerprinting and police probity checks for agents, eligibility criteria, and licensing of trainers.

“South Australia comes from a strong starting point, having already introduced mandatory fingerprinting and stringent police checks for security agents from late 2005.”

Mr Rau is calling for public submissions on a series of proposed amendments to the *Security and Investigation Agents Act 1995* and *Security and Investigation Agents Regulations 1996*.

In line with the national agreement, requirements for people who train security guards will be tightened. Proposed changes include requiring security industry trainers to hold a licence, and training providers to gain the approval of the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs before they can provide any training.

Individual trainers and directors of Registered Training Organisations that deliver security guard training will need to undergo fingerprinting and police checks, to ensure they meet the same stringent probity requirements as those required of licensed security agents.

The proposals will also streamline the system. For example, the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs would be able to waive mandatory fingerprinting or police checks if the applicant has already undergone them to obtain another security licence in South Australia, or in another state or territory that has the same standards as South Australia.

“The eligibility criteria for people who wish to obtain a security or investigation agent's licence, or work as a process server, will be revised in line with the national agreement,” Mr Rau said.

“These revised criteria will also apply to the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs’ ability to suspend or cancel a security agents or trainers licence, or commence disciplinary action against a licensed agent or trainer, in certain circumstances.

“Ultimately, the changes are designed to ensure the community can have confidence in the security agents who are often at the forefront of their safety.”

For more information or to provide feedback on the proposed amendments, visit www.ocba.sa.gov.au. The consultation period closes on 31 March 2011.