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ACT POLICE POWERS OUT FOR DISCUSSION

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Attorney General, Simon Corbell has today released a discussion paper for community consultation that deals with the possible consolidation of general police powers in a single piece of legislation.

The *Review of Police Criminal Investigative Powers Discussion Paper* considers a broad range of police powers and advocates the modernisation and consolidation of those powers into a single piece of legislation.

"The aim of these proposals is to provide the courts, legal practitioners and the community with a single source of legislation for all police criminal investigative powers.

The discussion paper deals with police powers like arrest procedures, search provisions, protections and safeguards for those in custody and how police treat those in custody."

The Discussion Paper was prepared by a multi-agency committee representing key stakeholders in the criminal justice system.

Mr Corbell said the consolidation of police powers in Territory law is important for two main reasons.

"Firstly, the ACT currently relies on the Commonwealth *Crimes Act 1914* for the safeguards, protections and procedures for the conduct of criminal investigations where people are in police custody. Secondly, Territory laws regulating police powers appear in a number of enactments which can cause confusion and frustration within the criminal justice system.

"It is important that we tailor legislation to best suit the needs of the ACT community, and this discussion paper canvases, in great detail, the Government's proposal and how it would make changes to the way policing is done in the Territory.

"The Government has committed to a comprehensive reform package of police powers and has already finalised legislation that deals with police powers like controlled operations, assumed identities, and surveillance devices.

"Each of these steps, together with release of the Government Report on Serious and Organised Crimes and Activities and the recent introduction of the Crimes (Serious Organised Crime) Amendment Bill 2008

underscores the Government's commitment to dynamic and effective responses to crime in our community.

The closing date for submissions is 30 June 2010. The Discussion Paper is available on the Justice and Community Safety website: http://www.justice.act.gov.au/

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