



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice**

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MORE WOMEN BARRISTERS TO GET GOVERNMENT WORK

NSW Government agencies will be encouraged to provide more legal work to women barristers and advocates, the Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced.

Mr Hatzistergos said that State Cabinet yesterday endorsed a new "equitable briefing policy", which will require all government agencies to actively seek female counsel in selecting barristers.

"Women comprise more than half of honours graduates from most NSW law schools, but are still under-represented at the Bar," said Mr Hatzistergos.

"The promotion of a Government-wide equitable briefing policy is designed to counteract this anomaly.

"More Government work means more experience for women barristers. This in turn will encourage other organisations in the private sector to regularly engage them."

Mr Hatzistergos said that the Attorney General's Department had adopted its own equitable briefing policy in 2004, leading to a significant increase in the amount of work allocated to female counsel.

"The adoption of equitable briefing policies leads to real changes in the way Government agencies go about engaging legal counsel.

"By adopting a whole of Government approach, the NSW Government is promoting the equal progression of women in the law and the wider community".

The new policy will not require a legislative amendment and will take effect after a memorandum is circulated to agencies.

Government departments and agencies routinely brief external counsel to represent them in courts and tribunals, and to provide legal advice.

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