

Business Alert !

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Police can take DNA from every offender

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NSW police are to be given the power to demand DNA samples from any offender regardless of the severity of the crime.

Under the legislation police will have the discretion to demand a hair sample or mouth swab after any arrest, no matter how minor. Police only have to believe that taking the sample will produce evidence linking the offender to a crime. At present samples can only be taken for serious offences such as murder, robbery and sexual assault.

Premier Morris lemma said yesterday police had to be given the tools to fight terrorists and other major criminals. But civil libertarians have accused the Government of creating a police state monitoring every aspect of the lives of its citizens.

NSW Council for Civil Liberties president Cameron Murphy said the Government was setting up a DNA database on the whole population by stealth. He said the community should be horrified that anyone could be arrested for jaywalking and asked for a DNA sample.

The changes to the laws will be introduced at the next sitting of Parliament.

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