

# Justice and Community Safety Directorate

## Legislation

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In 2001, the Labor Government forecast its intention to expand restorative justice (RJ) options for the criminal justice system. A Restorative Justice Sub-committee was established as part of the Government's sentencing review process to develop a model of RJ for the ACT community.

After two years of extensive consultation with government agencies and community services, the Sub-committee produced an [Issues Paper](#) that set out an innovative model of RJ. The model was to be underpinned by legislation and on 31st January 2005 the [Crimes \(Restorative Justice\) Act 2004](#) (the Act) commenced operation.

The Act emphasises the importance of the need for RJ to have a constructive impact upon people who commit crimes. The objects of the Act are to enhance the rights of people who are victims of crime and to ensure that their interests are given high priority in the administration of RJ. The objects of the Act are:

- a) to enhance the rights of victims of offences by providing RJ as a way of empowering victims to make decisions about how to repair the harm done by offences;
- b) to set up a system of RJ that brings together victims, offenders and their personal supporters in a carefully managed, safe environment;
- c) to ensure that the interests of victims of offences are given high priority in the administration of RJ under this Act;
- d) to enable access to RJ at every stage of the criminal justice process without substituting for the criminal justice system or changing their normal process of criminal justice; and,
- e) to enable agencies that have a role in the criminal justice system to refer offences for RJ.