

Sunday, 16 December 2007

HOONS TO GET YELLOW WHEEL CLAMPS FOR CHRISTMAS

A tougher crack-down on hoon and drug driving and graffiti vandalism comes into force from today.

Attorney-General Michael Atkinson says these laws allow an offender's vehicle to be clamped at home for up to 90 days, impounded or forfeited for hoon-driving offences. The new laws are extended to other offences:

- **Driving persistently unregistered or persistently unlicensed;**
- **Drug driving; and**
- **Graffiti vandalism.**

South Australia now has some of the harshest penalties in the country dealing with these offences.

Mr Atkinson says the anti-hoon laws have been working well for more than two years. Nearly 2,000 hoon cars have been impounded and about 2,500 hoon drivers have been prosecuted under the laws the Rann Government introduced in 2005.

“Now we are ramping up those penalties and extending it to other anti-social and dangerous offences,” Mr Atkinson says.

Under the new laws the penalties have been extended to allow:

- Police to home-clamp immediately **OR** impound an offender's vehicle for up to seven days.
- Police to apply to the courts to extend that period to 90 days; and
- Police to home-clamp any vehicle owned by the alleged offender.

“Police will still have the power to apply for the forfeiture of a car for those idiots who just don't get the message that this kind of behaviour is stupid and dangerous.

“Already we have seen hoons lose their cars for good and I fully expect to see more of these cars sold off by the courts with proceeds going to the Victims of Crime fund.

“They ruin people's quality of life with their dangerous, anti-social behaviour and we are acting to hit them where it hurts, by taking their pride and joy off the road,” Mr Atkinson says.

“The new laws provide an immediate punishment that not only causes inconvenience, but, with a bright yellow clamp on the car in the driveway, tells the neighbours what kind of behaviour the owner has been up to.”

Mr Atkinson says the period for which the courts can take into account a previous offence has now been extended from five to 10 years.

“The courts and police now have the authority to impose the penalties the public expect,” Mr Atkinson says.