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STATEMENT

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DEFAMATION REFORMS

On 27 July 2020 the nation's Attorneys-General agreed to implement new defamation laws developed following an 18 month [NSW-led reform process](#). The next day, I began parliamentary consideration of the reforms in the NSW Legislative Assembly.

The NSW Parliament passed the [Defamation Amendment Bill 2020](#) on 6 August with support from all sides.

I'm grateful to the Attorneys-General of Victoria and South Australia who've also guided this historic reform through their respective Parliaments.

Attorneys-General have now agreed that New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and all other jurisdictions that are able to do so will commence the Model Defamation Amendment Provisions 2020 on 1 July 2021, and remaining jurisdictions will commence those provisions as soon as possible thereafter.

These reforms update a defamation regime that was enacted before the social media revolution. They are just the first stage. Attorneys-General have also agreed to release a 'Stage 2 Discussion Paper' seeking stakeholder feedback in response to questions about:

- the liability in defamation law of internet intermediaries for third party content published using their services; and
- whether defamation law is having a chilling effect on reports of alleged criminal conduct to police and statutory investigative bodies and to reports of misconduct to employers and professional disciplinary bodies.

The Discussion Paper will be published next week.