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Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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SECURITY UPGRADE FOR NSW'S BUSIEST COURTHOUSE

Safety for court users at the Southern Hemisphere's largest court complex has improved with the completion of the largest security upgrade at the Sydney Downing Centre in almost 30 years.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said the project delivers high-tech security screening at the entrance to the courthouse, including 3D body scanners.

"3D scanning will improve dramatically the ability for Sheriff's Officers to detect and seize dangerous items court users may attempt to bring to court. New aviation standard X-ray machines have been rated as the best in the industry and will significantly boost security capabilities," Mr Speakman said.

The screening layout at the Downing Centre has also been overhauled to improve the flow of people entering and exiting the state's busiest courthouse.

For the first time, there is a dedicated screening unit for legal practitioners and court staff to fast-track their entry into the complex and to avoid delays.

The Justice of the Peace desk has been relocated closer to the entrance before security, so people needing documents certified or witnessed don't have to wait in the queue.

"Hundreds of people use the Downing Centre every day, which is why reducing bottlenecks at scanners during peak hours will make it easier and faster to enter the courthouse while also improve safety," Mr Speakman said.

New electronic safety signage has been installed along with an anti-pass exit lane which stops people bypassing the scanners to return to the courthouse through the exit gate.

"Carrying out the upgrade during a period of reduced in-person court sittings due to the pandemic has enabled the work to be completed quickly," Mr Speakman said.

The security upgrade which started in May has been delivered as part of the Department of Community and Justice's 2019/20 capital program which has funded improvements to justice facilities across the state.