

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Access to justice limited by more cuts to SA courts

Victim Support Service today expressed concern over the rumored closure of the Holden Hill and Port Adelaide Magistrates Courts.

Media reports suggest the State Courts Administration Authority (CAA) is intending to shut down the two suburban courts to save \$4 million.

Chief Executive Julian Roffe said the closures will have a significant impact on victims of crime.

“Reducing the number of courts in South Australia will only add to the existing pressure on our justice system,” Mr Roffe said.

“It will increase the number of matters heard in Adelaide, Elizabeth and Christies Beach, which means victims will have to wait longer to have their matter heard.

“The closures will increase travel costs to victims, too. Instead of having their matter heard at a local court, victims will have to travel further to exercise their right to attend criminal proceedings”.

The suburban closures follow the reduction in the number of District Court circuits in Port Augusta and Mount Gambier in late 2013.

“Victims living in suburban areas will soon experience the same barriers to participating in the justice system as victims living in country areas,” Mr Roffe said.

Victim Support Service understands that any decision to close Courts rests with the CAA, one of seven key agencies that sit on the Criminal Justice Reform Council, Chaired by the Minister for Justice Reform, John Rau.

“It’s ironic that one of the key members of the Criminal Justice Reform Council has made an independent decision to reduce services when the key aims of the Council were to improve interactions between agencies, improve service delivery, and ensure that services are fair and just,” Mr Roffe said.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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