



Offenders to pay more to Victims Compensation Fund

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The Rees Government will double the current Victims Compensation Levy as part of the Mini-Budget, NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos announced today.

Mr Hatzistergos said the levy, which must be paid by people convicted of offences, had not increased for 11 years.

"The current levy of \$70 for offenders convicted of serious offences and \$30 for less serious offenders will be doubled," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"In 2007/08 criminals paid around \$2.8 million in victims compensation levies.

"By increasing the existing levies, we expect an additional \$2.4 million per year will be raised."

Mr Hatzistergos said the NSW Government delivers important services to compensate and rehabilitate victims of crime.

"The Victims Compensation Fund ensures much needed support services are available to victims of crime throughout the state to help them with their recovery," he said.

"Victims can receive assistance with counselling, medical costs, loss of earnings and loss of personal effects. This is an important part of the healing process."

In addition, Mr Hatzistergos said the Attorney General's Department will streamline the compensation claim process by reducing the instances where legal fees are required to be paid.

"An estimated \$2.6 million could be saved by cutting red-tape for victims lodging a claim," he said.

"The Rees Government is strongly committed to providing victims with the support they need to recover from their ordeal and will continue to enhance the victims compensation system."