

## MEDIA RELEASE



**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC  
Attorney General  
Minister for Citizenship  
Minister for Regulatory Reform**

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### **Laws to streamline e-commerce**

New laws introduced into NSW Parliament today will make it easier to conduct business on the internet and through other electronic means by clarifying the rules for contracts that are made via electronic communications.

“This is about providing certainty for businesses and individuals who are increasingly using electronic means such as the internet, email, text and voice messages to enter into business transactions,” NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos said.

“We now live in a world where buying and selling online and communicating electronically is commonplace.

“That is why we have introduced these new laws to clarify the law of contract in relation to electronic communications to give businesses a clear set of rules within which they can operate.”

The Electronic Transactions Amendment Bill 2010 makes a number of amendments that clarify how contracts are offered and accepted via electronic communications.

The amendments include:

- clarifying the use of automated message systems as they relate to the offering and acceptance of business contacts;
- setting default rules about the time that electronic messages are capable of being received;
- providing that a contract formed by the interaction of automatic message system and a person or another system is not invalid merely because automated message systems were used.

The NSW Bill is based on a model law that was agreed to by all State and Territory Attorneys General, and the Commonwealth Attorney General, in 2010 after national consultation.

They reflect the most recent United Nations convention on the use of electronic communications in business, to which the Australian Government proposes to accede after appropriate domestic laws are in place.

This will ensure rules are consistent across Australia, and internationally, to support the growth of e-commerce.