

## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Thursday 30 October 2014

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## Criminal justice and vulnerable people the focus of workshop this week

Issues around vulnerability and the criminal justice system will be the focus of a day-long workshop today (**Thursday 30 October**) at the University of Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies (TILES) at the University of Tasmania in partnership with the University of Western Sydney, is convening the workshop, titled: *Vulnerable People, Criminal Justice and Policing: competing or irreconcilable views*.

Interstate and local academics and practitioners will showcase innovations in policy and practice in the way vulnerable people (offenders, victims and witnesses alike) navigate the criminal justice process and the difficulties they may encounter.

“Vulnerable people” can refer to young people, refugees, or indigenous Australians, among others.

The workshop is loosely based on issues raised in Dr Isabelle Bartkowiak-Théron (TILES) and Associate Professor Nicole L. Asquith's (University of Western Sydney) book about the policing of vulnerable people published in 2012, *Policing Vulnerability*. Both academics will speak at the workshop.

Dr Isabelle Bartkowiak-Théron said issues of vulnerability in policing have become a critical issue for policing services across the world.

“However, the increase in terminology, policies and practices which aim to address vulnerability are inconsistent across and within jurisdictions, and it can be difficult to evaluate how well they work.”

Dr Bartkowiak-Théron and Associate Professor Asquith's research suggests approaching vulnerability with a universal precaution model may help address the most common consequences of vulnerability and create mechanisms through which vulnerability can be more readily identified and addressed.

Dr Bartkowiak-Théron said Tasmania Police provides a positive example.

“Tasmania Police now leads the way in which the circumstances of vulnerable people are approached, from the point of view of teaching and policy.”

The Hon Dr Vanessa Goodwin MLC (Attorney General, Tasmania) will open the workshop at 9am. Robin Banks, Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, will close the workshop around 4pm.

**Media opportunity:** Media are able to attend the workshop, schedule attached.

**Information released by:**

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