

# Media Statement

## Response to media reports – NSW Police use of Taser

This statement is made in response to recent media reports concerning an incident involving the use by the NSW Police Force of a Taser weapon. Those reports have referenced the role and work of the NSW Ombudsman.

The NSW Ombudsman conducted two investigations into the use of Tasers by the NSW Police Force:

- NSW Police first introduced Tasers in 2002 in limited numbers and only to specialist police units.
- The NSW Ombudsman conducted its first investigation into Taser use by NSW Police during 2007–08. [The report of the first investigation](#) was tabled in Parliament in November 2008.
- Between October 2008 and November 2011, NSW Police rolled out Tasers to accredited general duties police.
- During 2009 and 2010, there were a number of cases in Australia where a person died or was seriously injured after police discharged a Taser at them.
- The NSW Ombudsman commenced a second investigation on 26 October 2010. [The report of the second investigation](#) was tabled in Parliament in October 2012, and [associated footage of selected case studies](#) was also published.

Use of Taser by NSW Police was also considered in the Ombudsman’s monitoring of the critical incident investigation into the death of Roberto Laudisio-Curti. [The Ombudsman’s Laudisio-Curti report](#) was tabled in Parliament in February 2013.

Following a [review of Police oversight by Mr Andrew Tink AM](#) in 2015, the NSW Parliament enacted the *Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016* (LECC Act). Commencing in 2017, the LECC Act established the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission as the single civilian oversight body for NSW Police.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, the LECC Act removed the Ombudsman’s powers:

- under the *Ombudsman Act 1974* to receive complaints about, or to investigate, the conduct of NSW Police or its members, and
- under the *Police Act 1990* to monitor investigations by the Police Commissioner of complaints or critical incidents.<sup>2</sup>

We cannot investigate or otherwise respond to the conduct of NSW Police in relation to the recent matter reported in the media, as we no longer have jurisdiction to receive complaints about or to investigate their conduct.

Media enquiries regarding NSW Police oversight can now be directed to the [Law Enforcement Conduct Commission](#) – see [Media enquiries | Law Enforcement Conduct Commission \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See [NSW Ombudsman Annual Report 2015-16](#) (at page 42)

<sup>2</sup> Where relevant, the NSW Police Force remains within the Ombudsman’s jurisdiction and is subject to its powers in relation to other Ombudsman functions. These include the Ombudsman’s functions of: Aboriginal Programs monitoring and assessment (Pt 3B *Ombudsman Act*); child death reviews (Part 5A and Part 6 *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act*), complaints-handling system reviews (s 25A *Ombudsman Act*), monitoring of the *Mandatory Disease Testing Act*, and oversight of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act*.