

## FACT SHEET

### Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Other Weapons) Bill 2025

The Police Offences Amendment (Knives and Other Weapons) Bill 2025 (the Bill) amends the *Police Offences Act 1935* (the Act).

Amendments to the Act and related legislation are aimed at improving police operations for the detection of dangerous articles (including knives) in prescribed public places and deterring offending through increased maximum penalties.

The Bill amends the Act by:

- Increasing penalties for dangerous article offences. Currently, the penalty for possessing, carrying or using a dangerous article in a public place is a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units and imprisonment for a period not exceeding 2 years. The Bill increases the penalties for this offence to a fine not exceeding 100 penalty units and imprisonment for a period not exceeding 3 years, or both.
- Lowering the threshold that must be met for a police officer to be able to stop and search a person for a dangerous article in a public place. Currently, a police officer is required to form a *reasonable belief* to stop and search a person under this provision. The Bill will lower the stop and search threshold to *reasonable suspicion*. This provides police with the power to stop and search a person when they have reasonable grounds to suspect a person, which is considered less than a reasonable belief but requires more than a mere possibility.
- Where a person, without a reasonable excuse, fails to comply with the requirement (for a wand search), a police officer may take such non-compliance as a reasonable suspicion the person may be in possession of a dangerous article.
- Introducing a new provision for electronic metal detector device searches (wandering) in certain prescribed places, whether or not the police officer has formed a reasonable suspicion that the person has in their possession, is carrying or using a dangerous article. This new provision will also authorise a police officer to detain a person for so long as reasonably necessary to exercise the search provision.
- Prescribing the following specified places in the *Police Offences Regulations 2024* where electronic metal detector device searches (or wandering) can occur:
  - Public transport hub - including bus station, jetty, airport, car park and stop/set down facility for public transportation.
  - Public passenger vehicle - within the meaning of the *Passenger Transport Services Act 2011*.

- Retail and shopping precinct – including shopping centre, shopping mall, retail strip.
- Venue where sport is played or exhibited.
- Entertainment precinct – including licensed premises or other area where persons are gathered for the purposes of entertainment or an event.
- Any place where medical or health services are provided.
- Education facility – including school, university, TAFE establishment, technical institute or any other place, building or service for the purpose of education or teaching.
- Place of worship – including any place where individuals or a group congregate to perform acts of devotion.
- Place of business or service provider, whether public or private.
- Any associated car park/set down area for the purposes of access or egress, or within a prescribed place.