



## **Canberra's Pilot Citizen's Jury for CTP Cause for Concern**

### **'ACT CTP' Alliance launched to help Canberrans make informed decisions**

Canberra, 18 September 2017

The latest attempt to attack Canberra's Compulsory Third Party (CTP) Insurance scheme could destroy the rights of nearly 300,000 motorists in Canberra if the public is misled by half-truths and misinformation.

The ACT Government has set up a pilot citizen's jury with the apparent aim of determining what existing compensation elements should be traded off. The pilot jury excludes many representatives directly involved in the issue of motor accidents. This exclusion includes lawyers, who safeguard the rights of injured people in the community, but most importantly, injured persons and their families who are currently going through and so are experiencing the current CTP process.

As a direct response to Chief Minister Andrew Barr's apparent attempts to reduce compensation paid to future innocent injured victims, an Alliance has been formed under the '**ACTCTP.org**' banner to inform and protect the rights of current and future motor vehicle accident victims. This includes every person who drives a car, rides a bike, is a passenger, walks across a pedestrian crossing or sits at a roadside cafe in the ACT. It affects all Canberrans. The Alliance aims to provide a comprehensive view of the current CTP scheme, outline changes that would protect the elements of fairness and transparency, inform the public about what has happened in other States that have gone down a restrictive, cut-price CTP path, and serve as a platform for Canberrans to ask questions about the pilot citizen's jury model.

An ACTCTP.org spokesperson, Ms Sarah Avery, President of the ACT Law Society expressed concern about how the process of selection and the provision of information to the jury lacked transparency, and said that it was disappointing that an apparently flawed process could stop jury members from getting all relevant information and harm injured Canberrans and their access to fair compensation in future.

"Citizen's juries are supposed to be a holistic representation of society. We don't think that people currently in the CTP system should be automatically excluded. A fair public jury needs to consist of a mix of people with varying levels of experience with CTP. Only then can you achieve a properly informed jury and win the public's trust in the citizen's jury process.

Ms Avery added, "We understand that Mr Barr has a number of more restrictive CTP schemes in mind as future models for the ACT. If the ACT Government pushes through its preferred scheme, it will mean more injured people will be forced into the social welfare

The ACT CTP campaign is a joint alliance of the ACT Law Society, ACT Bar Association and the Australian Lawyers Alliance. The campaign is supported by these organisations and many others who are concerned about the proposed changes to the CTP Scheme. For more information, please go to [www.actctp.org](http://www.actctp.org)



system, or forced to take out expensive private injury and income protection insurance, rather than, as they do now, getting a level of compensation that would enable them to have flexibility as to how their injuries are treated and to pursue the recovery of the actual loss they have suffered.

“If our CTP scheme changes to one of Mr Barr’s preferred options, our drivers, passengers, cyclists, children and pedestrians – Canberrans who have been injured through no fault of their own – will receive less or no compensation for their expenses and losses.”

Concerns about the short timelines for convening the public jury as well as the limited information available on the ACT Government website were also expressed by the Alliance.

“The CTP scheme is a safety net for every motorist, and in fact every person, in Canberra and any decision to reform the scheme should be heavily scrutinised, with informed and broad public debate and consideration from all angles. The rushed timelines for commencing the citizen’s jury process have been dictated by the Government. We have to ask why Mr Barr is rushing this through.” said Ms Avery.

“Fundamentally, we have a good CTP system in place which protects the rights of Canberrans and ensures a fair go for people who’ve been injured through no fault of their own. It’s not perfect which is why we would like to work together with the people of Canberra, including the citizen’s jury and the Legislative Assembly to improve the system. To do that, we need to make sure that the citizen’s jury is fairly and transparently selected, and given enough time to understand our CTP system. If we do get a fair citizen’s jury process in place, we can use that to make Canberra’s existing CTP scheme even better. While we do that, we will not take a backward step in protecting your existing rights, because the rights of our community’s vulnerable injured people are worth fighting for.”

The campaign will see an integrated advertising campaign, as well as a new website, [www.actctp.org](http://www.actctp.org) and a petition to encourage the Government to listen and make changes to its proposals as soon as possible.

For more information, please contact Pamela Philip 9818 0929

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