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MEDIA RELEASE

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POLYGRAPH TESTING MAY BE THE WAY FORWARD

Independent MLC Ann Bressington has undertaken a research project to look into the efficacy and possible application of Polygraphing for use as evidence into the Family and Youth Courts.

“Polygraph evidence is widely used in the USA, with remarkable reliability,” Ms Bressington said.

“Polygraphs have been scientifically proven to be over 96% accurate and go a long way to eliminating human uncertainty or bias. My research shows that the accuracy and efficacy of the polygraph techniques is such that they have been used in 36 states in the USA for the past 15 years.

“False allegations in the family court are not currently viewed as an offence, and it often seems that the attitude on emotional issues such as child abuse and child sex abuse is ‘guilty until proven innocent’ which means that anyone can make a mischievous or damning claim against another without consequences.”

Ms Bressington has been consulting with Australian Polygraph Services and has randomly chosen to trial 12 individuals who have agreed to participate in Polygraph testing to establish their innocence against what they claim to be “false allegations”.

Preliminary evidence suggests polygraph testing may be useful in assisting Departments like Families SA better concentrate their efforts on those cases which warrant their interventions by better utilising precious tax payer resources.

Polygraph testing has been used for over 80 years as an investigative aid to:

- Disputes of fact
- Family issues
- Theft and Frauds
- False allegations/accusations
- Professional misconduct allegations

“Departments such s Families SA that have exceeded their budgets by millions of dollars could benefit from such technology to better identify where to focus their attention on allegations of child abuse and sexual abuse,” Ms Bressington said.

“This is a precise and forensically certified process and would require professionals with the appropriate training to conduct the testing. It is time we utilised technologies at hand to take away the huge burden of responsibility on already overworked and stressed staff in the area of child protection who make decisions that can make or break family units and impact on the lives of thousands of children in this state.”

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