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### **Redfern Legal Centre concerned about police search operation at a public train station**

Redfern Legal Centre has raised grave concerns about increased police strip search activity in New South Wales, following yesterday's police drug search operation at Central Station. The operation saw commuters subjected to humiliating searches behind 'privacy screens' during peak hour at Sydney's busiest train station.

Redfern Legal Centre is calling for changes to NSW strip-search laws in response to figures showing that police strip searches have increased by almost 50% in NSW over the past four years.

RLC's police powers solicitor Samantha Lee said that these actions were harming community relations with police.

"A high number of strip searches find nothing illegal, which places serious doubt on whether many of these searches are necessary and justified," Ms Lee said.

"We have been begun constructive conversations with police around these issues, but operations like this are causing unnecessary harm.

"We urge anyone who was subjected to a strip search at Central Station yesterday to make an immediate complaint to the Law Enforcement Commission. Strip searches are meant to be a last resort, not the first port of call. These police actions are concerning."

The NSW police conduct watchdog, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, is currently conducting an investigation into whether NSW Police are abusing their strip-searching powers.

Redfern Legal Centre has commissioned UNSW Law to produce a report examining police strip search laws in NSW, and how these laws differ in other states and territories across Australia and internationally.

"This disturbing approach to police strip searches at music festivals and other public places is harming young people and creating division between police and the public," Ms Lee said.

"We want to see strip-search laws strengthened to provide increased safeguards for the public and greater guidance for police."

Redfern Legal Centre has launched a campaign to change NSW strip-search laws, [www.safeandsound.org.au](http://www.safeandsound.org.au)

**RLC police powers solicitor, Samatha Lee is available for interview:** contact Finn O'Keefe, RLC Communications Manager: 02 9698 7277 | 0424 548 019 | [finn@rlc.org.au](mailto:finn@rlc.org.au)