

Introduction

Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report contains the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties' review of the following treaty actions tabled on 10 February 2015:
 - *Agreement between Australia and the Republic of India on Social Security* (Canberra, 18 November 2014); and
 - Amendments to the Annex of the Protocol of 1997 relating to the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973*, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto.
- 1.2 The Committee's resolution of appointment empowers it to inquire into any treaty to which Australia has become a signatory, on the treaty being tabled in Parliament.
- 1.3 The treaties, and matters arising from them, are evaluated to ensure that ratification is in the national interest, and that unintended or negative effects on Australians will not arise.
- 1.4 Prior to tabling, major treaty actions are subject to a National Interest Analysis (NIA), prepared by the Government. This document considers arguments for and against the treaty, outlines the treaty obligations and any regulatory or financial implications, and reports the results of consultations undertaken with State and Territory Governments, Federal and State and Territory agencies, and with industry or non-government organisations.
- 1.5 A Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) may accompany the NIA. The RIS provides an account of the regulatory impact of the treaty action where adoption of the treaty will involve a change in the regulatory environment

for Australian business. An RIS was not required for any of the treaties under consideration in this report.

- 1.6 The Committee takes account of these documents in its examination of the treaty text, in addition to other evidence taken during the inquiry program.
- 1.7 Copies of each treaty and its associated documentation may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website at:
 - http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Treaties/10_February_2015.

Conduct of the Committee's review

- 1.8 The treaty actions reviewed in this report were advertised on the Committee's website from the date of tabling. The Committee invited written submissions by 27 February 2015.
- 1.9 The Committee invited all State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the Presiding Officers of each Parliament to lodge submissions. The Committee also invited submissions from individuals and organisations with an interest in the particular treaty under review.
- 1.10 The Committee held a public hearing into these treaties in Canberra on Monday 16 March 2015.
- 1.11 The transcripts of evidence from the public hearings may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website under the treaties' tabling date, being:
 - 10 February 2015.
- 1.12 A list of submissions received and their authors is at Appendix A.
- 1.13 A list of witnesses who appeared at the public hearings is at Appendix B.