



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AND EXTERNAL TERRITORIES

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Issue date: 30 March 2017

## Indian Ocean Territories hearings

The Parliament's External Territories Committee is visiting Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands for infrastructure inspections, meetings and hearings with residents in relation to its current inquiry into the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean Territories.

Committee Chair, Mr Ben Morton MP said the visit follows a roundtable and public hearing held in Canberra.

"We heard from a range of government department representatives (including the Departments of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Immigration and Border Protection), and subject experts and academics," Mr Morton said.

"Submissions and discussions so far have covered topics including maritime surveillance, defence contingencies, regional cooperation, investment in government infrastructure and implications for territories' residents.

"I am looking forward to the opportunity to talk directly to the islands' residents at further roundtable style hearings that focus on the impacts on local communities."

The Committee is reviewing:

- the changing regional security environment and security contingencies;
- defence capability in the territories and associated infrastructure development;
- the scope of maritime, air and other cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners; and
- impacts on local communities.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING, COURTHOUSE, CHRISTMAS ISLAND**

Date: Tuesday 4 April 2017

9:00 am Roundtable with invited participants

11:05 am Community statements

12:15 pm Close

#### **PUBLIC HEARING, CYCLONE SHELTER/THE CLUB, WEST ISLAND, COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS**

Date: Wednesday 5 April 2017

11:00 am Roundtable with invited participants

12:00 pm Community statements



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12:30 pm Close

### **PUBLIC HEARING, SHIRE CHAMBERS, HOME, COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS**

Date: Wednesday 5 April 2017

4:30 PM Roundtable with invited participants and community statements

5:30 pm Close

Further information about the inquiry can be accessed via the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ncet>.

**For media comment:** Please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Ben Morton MP on (08) 9354 9633 (electorate office).

**For background information:** Please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4355 or email [jscncet@aph.gov.au](mailto:jscncet@aph.gov.au)