



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security**

Review of the National Security Legislation Amendment (Espionage and Foreign Interference) Bill 2017

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Issue date: 15 March 2018

## **Public hearing on proposed amendments to Espionage and Foreign Interference Bill**

Tomorrow, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security will hold a public hearing in Melbourne on proposed amendments to the National Security Legislation Amendment (Espionage and Foreign Interference) Bill 2017.

On 6 March 2018, the Attorney-General, the Hon Christian Porter MP, provided the Committee with range of proposed amendments, which, in summary:

- create separate secrecy offences that apply to non-Commonwealth officers and are narrower in scope than those applying to Commonwealth officers;
- narrow the definitions of 'inherently harmful information' and 'causes harm to Australia's interests', which form part of the proposed secrecy offences applying to Commonwealth officers;
- strengthen the defence for journalists at proposed section 122.5(6);
- limit the definition of 'security classification' to secret and top secret, and remove strict liability;
- limit the proposed espionage offence at section 91.3 to security classified information that is dealt with for the primary purpose of making it available to a foreign principal.

The proposed amendments have been published on the Committee's [website](#) (see Submission 40).

### **Public hearing details:**

8.30am – 12.15pm, Committee Room G7 and G8, 55 St Andrews Place, East Melbourne

A range of government and non-government witnesses have been invited to appear before the Committee. The hearing will be broadcast live at [aph.gov.au/live](http://aph.gov.au/live)

Detailed hearing programs and further information about the Committee's reviews, including submissions received to date, can be obtained from the Committee's [website](#).

The Committee is continuing its inquiry into the Bill and its proposed amendments, and now intends to present its report to the Parliament in April.

### **Media enquiries:**

Chair, Mr Andrew Hastie MP (Canning, WA) on 08 9534 8044 (Electorate office) or (02) 6277 4223 (Parliament House)



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