

Monday, 22 November 2021

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary, Mr Chairman, Deputy Chairman and members of the committee.

I am writing with regard to the 'Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (ENNPIA),' referred to JSCOT on 22 November, 2021.

As a former long-standing member of this committee, I appreciate just how many matters you are likely to be dealing with, particularly as the sitting year draws to a close. I was therefore appalled at the announcement of the ENNPIA reference to the standing committee with a five day submission window. The AUKUS agreement and its proposed nuclear technology transfers is one of the most consequential military and foreign policy announcements of our time. The ramifications are immense, as evidenced by the public concerns raised right across the political spectrum, from establishment military and foreign policy figures, technologists, civil society organisations and former Prime Ministers.

Setting this impossibly short timeframe for public submissions is a red flag that the executive intends to set aside the sober and painstaking deliberations of this committee in favour of a shotgun inquiry to rubber stamp a predetermined outcome. Assuming that JSCOT retains the culture of cross-party collaboration and collegiality that I remember warmly, I respectfully invite you to resist this arbitrary and insulting abuse of due process, and set a timetable for your inquiry that allows for widespread and meaningful participation. At the minimum this should include public hearings in Perth, Adelaide, Darwin and anywhere the consequences of this agreement will have a material impact on community amenity, security and safety.

JSCOT's role in scrutinising such agreements is far too important to simply go under the wheels of an executive government in a hurry. I urge you to give the community the maximum opportunity to participate in this important inquiry.

In trust,

Scott Ludlam

former Senator for Western Australia
Committee Member from 4.9.2008 to 7.7.2014