



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AND EXTERNAL TERRITORIES

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Roundtable discussions on Australia's Indian Ocean Territories

The Parliament's External Territories Committee will host a roundtable discussion tomorrow from 9 am to 12:30 pm on the enduring strategic importance of the Indian Ocean Territories.

Committee Chair, Mr Ben Morton MP, said he is looking forward to holding our first hearing for the inquiry and gathering together departmental officials, subject area experts and academics.

"Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands may be small dots in the Indian Ocean, but the territories' proximity to Asia and major shipping lines means they remain vital to Australia's defence, trade and security interests," Mr Morton said.

The Committee will examine different angles including maritime surveillance, military contingencies and regional cooperation, investment in government infrastructure, and implications for the territories' residents.

Further information about the inquiry, including the submissions received and the hearing program can be accessed via the Committee's inquiry [website](#).

For media enquiries: Please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Ben Morton MP on 08 9354 9633

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