

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security to Review Australia's terrorism legislation

In 2002 the Commonwealth Parliament passed a series of security and counter terrorism laws as part of Australia's response to the threat of international terrorism.

Section 29(1)(ba) of the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* requires the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (the Committee) to review the operation, effectiveness and implications of the:

- *Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002*;
- *Border Security Legislation Amendment Act 2002*;
- *Criminal Code Amendment (Suppression of Terrorist Bombings) Act 2002*; and
- *Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2002*;

and report the Committee's comments and recommendations to each House of the Parliament and to the responsible Minister, as soon as practicable after the third anniversary of the laws coming into force.

The package of legislation was the subject of an independent and public inquiry by the Security Legislation Review Committee under the chairmanship of the Hon. Simon Sheller AO QC (the Sheller Inquiry). The Report of the Sheller Inquiry was tabled by the Attorney General in the Parliament on 15 June 2006.

Section 4 of the *Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002* requires the Committee to take account of the Report of the Sheller Inquiry in the conduct of its own review. The Committee has therefore decided to conduct a modified review of the laws in question with a focus on the Sheller Inquiry recommendations. Witnesses to the Sheller Inquiry are invited to comment on the Sheller Inquiry recommendations by **COB 7 July 2006**. Hearings will be held on 31 July and 1 August, Parliament House, Canberra and will be notified in the usual way.

The Committee has also decided not to review the operation of section 102.1 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, which governs the listing of an organisation as a terrorist organisation. This topic will be the subject of a separate review by the Committee in early 2007, pursuant its statutory obligation under subsection 102.1A (2) of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

The Committee expects to table its report in the spring session of Parliament. Access to the Sheller Report is available at: <http://www.ag.gov.au/slrc>

For media comment, contact the Chairman, **Mr David Jull, MP** on **07 5580 0355**.

For more information, contact the committee secretariat on **02 6277 4650** or visit the PJCIS's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pjcis/securityleg/index.htm>

