

**Public hearing on the Australian-Chile Free Trade Agreement, radio regulations and IP Australia as a international searching authority**

On Monday 13 October, the Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee will hear evidence on three treaties tabled on 16 September and 17 June 2008. These treaties include an Australian free trade agreement with Chile which would remove most barriers for Australian business to enter into Chile and provide a high degree of economic integration for markets through comprehensive commitments in a range of areas.

Although bilateral trade with Chile is modest, involving \$856m in 2007, Australia is the fourth largest source of foreign investment in Chile, with investments amounting to US\$3b in 2007.

The Committee will be hearing evidence from:

- Horticulture Australia; Construction, Forestry,
- Mining and Energy Union; and,
- the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Representatives from the Department of Broadbanding, Communications and the Digital Economy will appear before the Committee to discuss the partial revision of the 2004 Radio Regulations of the International Telecommunications Union (WRC-07). This agreement would align Australia with the rest of the world in its regulation of the radiofrequency spectrum. Australia would retain its sovereign right to control transmissions within and into its territory and to protect Australian users from interference from foreign systems.

The proposed internationally prestigious appointment of the Australian Patent Office as an International Searching Authority and an International Preliminary Examination Authority is necessary for Australia to function as a competent search and examination authority for international patent applications. It will eliminate unnecessary repetition and provide significant cost savings for patent applicants.

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM 10.00 am-12.00 pm, Monday, 13 October 2008

Venue: Committee Room 2R1, 2nd floor, Parliament House, Canberra

- 10:00am** **Partial Revision of the 2004 Radio Regulations, as incorporated in the International Telecommunications Union Final Acts of the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-07),**
- 10:20am** **Agreement with WIPO in relation to the functioning of the Australian Patent Office as an International Search Authority and International Preliminary Examination Authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty,**
- 10:40am** **Australia – Chile Free Trade agreement**

The public hearing will be broadcast on the House Monitoring Service, radio and webcast live on the Parliament House website at: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>.

Further information is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/jsct

MEDIA CONTACTS

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