

Introduction

Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report contains advice to Parliament on the review by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties of two treaty actions tabled in Parliament on 28 March¹ and 5 September 2006.² These treaty actions are:

28 March 2006³

- *Exchange of Letters constituting an Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand to Amend Article 3 of the Australia New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA) of 28 March 1983*

5 September 2006⁴

- *Treaty between the Government of Australia and the People's Republic of China on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (Canberra, 3 April 2006)*

1 Australia, House of Representatives 2004-05-06, *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 91, p. 1026; Australia, Senate 2004-06, *Journal*, No. 77, p. 1993.

2 Australia, House of Representatives 2004-05-06, *Votes and Proceedings*, No. 120, p. 1360; Senate 2004-06, *Journal*, No. 99, p. 2574.

3 The other remaining treaties tabled in March are included in the Committee's Reports 74, 75 and 76.

4 The other remaining treaties tabled in September are included in the Committee's Report 79.

Briefing documents

- 1.2 The advice in this Report refers to the National Interest Analyses (NIAs) prepared for the proposed treaty actions. These documents are prepared by the Government agency (or agencies) responsible for the administration of Australia's responsibilities under each treaty. Copies of the NIAs may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/28march2006/tor.htm>

www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/5_6_september2006/tor.htm

- 1.3 Copies of treaty actions and NIAs may also be obtained from the Australian Treaties Library maintained on the internet by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Australian Treaties Library is accessible through the Committee's website or directly at:

www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/

Conduct of the Committee's review

- 1.4 The review contained in this report was advertised in the national press and on the Committee's website.⁵ Invitations to lodge submissions were also sent to all State Premiers, Chief Ministers, Presiding Members of Parliament, stakeholder organisations and to individuals who have expressed an interest in being kept informed of proposed treaty actions. Submissions received and their authors are listed at Appendix A.

- 1.5 The Committee received evidence at public hearings held on 8 May, 14 August, 11 September and 9 October 2006. A list of witnesses who appeared before the Committee at public hearings is at Appendix B. Transcripts of evidence from public hearings may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/28march2006/hearings.htm>

www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/5_6_september2006/hearings.htm

5 The Committee's review of the proposed treaty actions was advertised in *The Australian* on 5 and 19 April and 20 September 2006. Members of the public were advised on how to obtain relevant information and invited to submit their views to the Committee, both in the advertisement and via the Committee's website.