



Submission No 52

Inquiry into Australia's Overseas Representation

Name: Tim Fawcett
General Manager Government Affairs & Policy
Public sector

Organisation: Cisco Systems Australia Pty Ltd
101 Collins Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000



Cisco Systems Australia Pty Ltd

Level 14, 101 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria Australia 3000
Ph: +61 3 9659 4200
Fax: +61 3 9659 4299

Secretary

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
House of Representatives,
PO Box 6021,
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

1 May 2012

Dear Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Cisco Australia Pty Ltd's submission to the JSCFADT's inquiry into Australia's Overseas Representation.

In summary, the submission proposes that the Australian government extend its highly successful deployment of high definition, secure and immersive video conferencing technologies for public administration activities. This system is delivering productivity improvements and cost savings – in excess of \$12 million in 12 months – with further savings expected.

The public services related to Australia's overseas representation could be an area where these technologies may enable Australia to continue to provide existing service levels and present opportunities to extend its capabilities in an environment of constrained resources.

Australia is leading the world in the deployment and use of secure, high-definition video technologies for public administration.

The National Intergovernmental Telepresence System has been deployed to allow Australian state and federal ministers and officials to conduct high level virtual meetings that are productive, flexible, immersive, lifelike, secure and, importantly, avoid significant travel costs and inconvenience.

The attached case study outlines the National Intergovernmental Telepresence System which was built for use by the Coalition of Australian Governments' (COAG) process. Also attached is a link to a video case study featuring Special Minister of State, The Hon Gary Gray, to accompany the written version.

The case studies provide detailed information about the use of the National Intergovernmental Telepresence System which has been highly successful and was specifically mentioned in Cisco's global Q2 earnings update delivered to thousands of media and analysts around the world.



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Cisco's submission argues that there is scope to extend the National Intergovernmental Telepresence System into other public administration activities and it is particularly suitable to many of the activities undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The system is highly secure which is a key factor in any system that DFAT may wish to deploy as it is for the COAG process and for many of Cisco's enterprise customers, such as the ANZ Bank which has been a major adopter of TelePresence technology.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is currently examining options or investing in new ICT capabilities in recognition of the benefits that this investment brings to the efficient operations and efficacy of the Department's activities.

Cisco's deployment of TelePresence video conferencing solutions across our own business helped us save over \$1 billion in 12 months without any impact on our topline revenue, customer satisfaction and employee welfare ratings.

While Cisco's submission is focussed on the Term of Reference (ToR) which examines *the affect of e-diplomacy and information and communications technology on the activities of diplomatic posts*, the submission also impacts on the other ToR as the capacity for immersive, high definition video to extend the capacity of Australia's foreign affairs services is strong.

I invite the Committee to experience the video conferencing capabilities for themselves either through the National Intergovernmental Telepresence System or Cisco will gladly host the Committee in Cisco offices in any capital city around Australia.

I would also welcome an opportunity to appear before the Committee in person or virtually to further discuss this submission.

Yours sincerely

Ken Boal

Director Public Sector

Cisco Australia Pty Ltd

Attachments:

1. Case study: Australian Federal Government National Intergovernmental Telepresence System
2. Video case study: Australian Government National Telepresence System: <http://bit.ly/sBPfEK>
3. Media coverage of video case study launch