



Passenger information treaty strengthens border protection measures

Australia's security agencies' ability to identify possible people of interest entering the country will be strengthened by the approval of a treaty allowing air passenger data to be transferred between the European Union and Australia.

The Agreement between the European Union (EU) and Australia on the Processing and Transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) Data by Air Carriers to the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service done at Brussels on 29 September 2011 provides the legal basis for the EU to transfer passenger data to Australia, a pre-requisite for the release of EU held personal information to other jurisdictions.

Treaties Committee Chair Kelvin Thomson MP said analysis of this and other data plays a critical role in identifying possible persons of interest in the context of combating transnational crimes.

"The committee recognises the need for balance between providing information to government agencies and personal privacy," Mr Thomson said. "The Agreement has been scrutinised in this area – most notably by the European Parliament - and the committee is satisfied that a suitable balance has been found."

The Treaties Committee has also approved two other treaties:

- *Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI on Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships by Inclusion of New Regulations on Energy Efficiency for Ships Resolution MEPC.203(62) adopted at London on 15 July 2011; and*
- *Protocol amending the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income (New Delhi, 16 December 2010)*

As well as a minor treaty action:

- *Amendment to Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade done at Rotterdam on 10 September 1998.*

The committee's views on all these treaties are covered in Report 124 which is available on the committee's website:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsct/reports.htm or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Media contact:	Mr Kelvin Thomson MP (Mr Anthony Cianflone) (03) 9350 5777
Background:	Committee Secretariat (02) 6277 4002