



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
**PARLIAMENTARY JOINT COMMITTEE  
ON LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**M E D I A   A L E R T**

## **Inquiry into unexplained wealth discussion paper released**

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement today released a [discussion paper](#) on its inquiry into Commonwealth unexplained wealth legislation and arrangements.

The committee is examining the operation of the unexplained wealth provisions of the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002* (PoCA), which can be used to target serious and organised crime bosses who arrange their affairs so that they can enjoy the proceeds of crime, without committing the actual crimes themselves.

The committee has heard evidence that the Commonwealth laws are not working effectively and that, to date, no cases have been able to be brought before the courts.

Committee Chair, Mr Chris Hayes MP, said: *"The aim of the discussion paper is to set out the issues and suggestions received by the committee so far, in order to encourage stakeholders to bring forward further evidence on the advantages and disadvantage of the suggestions."*

The committee has also heard evidence suggesting the need to further clarify the objectives of the PoCA.

Mr Hayes MP, said: *"There is a need for greater clarity in the objects of the PoCA to ensure that those involved in the operation of unexplained wealth laws understand the focus on the prevention of and protection from the scourge of serious and organised crime, which is markedly different from the traditional post-crime prosecution context."*

The issue of national harmonisation of unexplained wealth laws has also been raised during the inquiry.

Mr Hayes MP, said: *"In the next phase of this inquiry the committee is keen to hear from stakeholders on options such as: developing a set of guiding principles for unexplained wealth laws across jurisdictions, model legislation, referral of powers, or international linkages."*

**The closing date for submissions for the next stage of the inquiry is 31 January 2012.** A public hearing is expected to be conducted on 10 February 2012.

**30 November 2011**

**For media comment:** Please contact the office of the Chair, Mr Chris Hayes MP, 02 9726 3988

**For other information:** Please contact the secretariat. Ph: 02 6277 3419 [le.committee@aph.gov.au](mailto:le.committee@aph.gov.au)

Paper available on: [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/le\\_ctte/unexplained\\_wealth/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/le_ctte/unexplained_wealth/index.htm)