

20 February 2002

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON A CERTAIN MARITIME INCIDENT

The Senate Select Committee inquiring into the so-called “children overboard” incident and the “Pacific solution” met for the first time in Canberra earlier today (20 February). The Committee met in private to plan the progress of the inquiry and to adopt appropriate procedures for its implementation.

“The Committee is keen to expedite the inquiry, and has proposed a schedule of hearings beginning the 25th of March” said Labor Senator Peter Cook, the inquiry chair. “The Committee will be inviting witnesses who are well placed to know details relevant to the matters under investigation to provide written submissions and to appear in person at the hearings”

As well, advertisements calling for submissions will appear in the press within the next few days. Information about the inquiry is also available on the parliament website www.aph.gov.au and from the Committee Secretariat on 02 62773537.

“The inquiry is keen to get as much material as possible on the public record,” Senator Cook said. “However, the Committee expects that certain people may wish to provide information to the inquiry on a confidential basis. The Committee has formal processes for receiving confidential submissions should people wish to pursue that option. It would help if those people contacted the inquiry secretariat prior to making confidential submissions.”

The deadline for submissions is 22 March, and late submissions may not be accepted. Submissions should be sent to the Secretary, Senate Select Committee on a Certain Maritime Incident, Room S1.57, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT via email to maritime.incident@aph.gov.au.