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MEDIA RELEASE

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
Inquiry into Australia's Antarctic Territory

Issue date: 18 June 2018

Breaking the ice: Antarctica inquiry report released

The [Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories](#) today released its report *Maintaining Australia's national interests in Antarctica: Inquiry into Australia's Antarctic Territory*.

In releasing the report, Committee Chair, [Mr Ben Morton MP](#), said that Australia has only begun to recognise the potential of its Antarctic program and in turn, the international engagement and scientific collaboration opportunities that Australia's presence on the continent can bring. Mr Morton also highlighted the potential that Hobart has an Antarctic gateway, saying that "Hobart's potential as a key international destination for the Antarctic sector is immense. The investment being brought to the city as a result of Antarctic science and infrastructure activity only enhances this reputation".

The Committee's report, the culmination of its inquiry into [Australia's Antarctic Territory](#), has proposed improvements to Australia's leadership, infrastructure development and scientific capabilities in support of Australia's national interests in Antarctica. The report's 22 recommendations include that the Australian Government:

- increase its formal site inspections under the Madrid Protocol once an increased overland traverse capability is established;
- appoint an Antarctic Ambassador to oversee Australia's diplomatic activities and provide leadership in propelling Australia's Antarctic interests internationally;
- develop a year-round aviation capability in Antarctica;
- examine options for the co-location of relevant Australian Government agencies or functions to the proposed Antarctic science hub in Hobart; and also establish an Office of Antarctic Services to better promote Hobart as a Antarctic gateway;
- improve the Australian Antarctic Division's resourcing, strategic value and recognise its tourism and educational potential; and
- consider how the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre can continue its valuable collaborative work.

The Committee's report may be found on the Committee's [website](#).

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For background information:

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