



## **Appendix D**

### **Conduct of the inquiry**

On 29 July 2000 the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties resolved to undertake an inquiry into nature and scope of Australia's relationship with the World Trade Organisation. The inquiry was chaired by Senator Helen Coonan.

The Committee advertised its inquiry in all major metropolitan newspapers and wrote to a number of organisations and individuals inviting submissions to the inquiry. There was a large public response to the inquiry, with 316 submissions received, as well as a large amount of other correspondence and petitions. A full list of submissions and exhibits to the inquiry is at Appendix E.

The Committee held public hearings in Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. The Committee also held round-table forums on issues central to the Committee's inquiry, including:

- agriculture and the WTO;
- culture and intellectual property;
- lawyers and the WTO;
- human rights, labour and the environment (2 sessions); and
- Australian businesses and exporters and their interaction with the WTO.

In addition, the Committee held public forums in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth and Melbourne, in which members of the public were invited to make a short statement to the Committee about Australia's relationship with the World Trade Organisation. The Committee was keen to hear from as many people as possible and to allow members of the community to have their views recorded by the

Parliament. A list of all participants in public hearings and forums is at Appendix F.

As well as formal submissions addressing the terms of reference for the inquiry, we received a large number of letters (including form letters and several petitions) generally calling for Australia to withdraw its membership of the WTO. The Committee noted the views expressed in this correspondence.

The Committee was pleased to hold private discussions with Mr Mike Moore, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation, during his visit to Australia in February 2001, and with Mr Andy Stoler, Deputy-Director of the World Trade Organisation, during his visit to Australia in September 2000 for the World Economic Forum. We thank Mr Moore and Mr Stoler for taking the time to meet with the Committee – these discussions were most useful.