



## Committee to review balloon flight agreement with US

Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee will examine a treaty allowing NASA to launch and recover scientific research balloons on Australian territory at a public hearing in Canberra.

The treaty will extend the existing 2006 Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America concerning the Conduct of Scientific Balloon Flights for Civil Research Purposes until 2022.

Committee chair Kelvin Thomson MP said the committee is interested to know what changes have been made to balloon launching procedures since a failed NASA balloon launch at Alice Springs Airport in April 2010 risked serious injury to civilian bystanders.

"NASA did conduct an investigation of the incident and the committee will want to know if the conclusions of the investigation have been acted on," Mr Thomson said.

The Committee will also examine a series of other treaties listed below.

**Public Hearing: Monday 6 February 2012, Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House  
Canberra — All welcome**

- 9:30am Agreement to extend the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America concerning the Conduct of Scientific Balloon Flights for Civil Research Purposes
- 10:00am Agreement between the Government of Australia and the European Space Agency for a Co-operative Space Vehicle Tracking Program
- 10:30am 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); and Revised MARPOL Annex V: Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships (Resolution MEPC.201(62)).
- 11:00am Agreement between the European Union and Australia on the Processing and Transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) Data by Air Carriers to the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
- 11:30am Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Latvia on Social Security
- 12:00pm Tax Information Exchange Agreements with: the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein; the Government of Costa Rica; the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China; and the Government of Liberia.

Copies of the *National Interest Analysis* and treaty texts are available under Treaties tabled on 2, 22 and 24 November 2011 at: <http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm>

Alternatively, interested parties may email [jsct@aph.gov.au](mailto:jsct@aph.gov.au) or phone (02) 6277 4002.

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