



Committee welcomes audit of investigative and coercive powers of Commonwealth agencies

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs welcomes the Attorney-General's audit of the investigative and coercive powers of security and law enforcement agencies. The audit took place following a recommendation in the Committee's report on the *Crimes Legislation Amendment (Powers and Offences) Act 2012*.

In February 2012 the Committee recommended that the Attorney-General undertake an audit of investigative and coercive powers available to security and law enforcement agencies in order to identify the full scope of powers available to those agencies, with a view to:

- comprehending the extent to which an individual's right to privacy can be abrogated; and
- ascertaining whether recent or any further expansion of those powers is necessary or justified.

The audit has determined that the existing scrutiny mechanisms for introducing or expanding investigative or coercive powers are effective in ensuring that the availability of such powers to Commonwealth agencies is appropriate and considered.

Committee Chair, Graham Perrett MP, said that "The Committee is pleased that the audit found that the Commonwealth law enforcement and security agencies have appropriate powers and that these powers are exercised in an accountable way with a range of scrutiny and oversight mechanisms."

The Committee considers that the audit document and accompanying table of existing oversight mechanisms and previous reports and reviews should be in the public domain and has made them available at the Committee website at http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=spla/bill%20crime%20legislation/index.htm.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0423 280 131.

For background information, please contact the **Secretariat of the Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs:**

PO Box 6021
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

Telephone: 02 6277 2358
Facsimile: 02 6277 4427
E-mail: spla.reps@aph.gov.au
Website: www.aph.gov.au/spla