



Public hearing on Australian membership of International Renewable Energy Agency and Antarctic fishing agreement

Australian membership of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) will be examined by Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee in a public hearing in Canberra on Monday (15 March). IRENA is a new, treaty level inter-governmental organisation, established to promote the widespread and increased adoption of all forms of renewable energy technologies around the world. 2010 is IRENA's first full year of operation.

When fully established, IRENA will be a centre of excellence for renewable energy technology. It will facilitate international engagement on this issue and allow member countries to benefit from the development of renewable energy technology through the transfer of knowledge and technology between members.

The Committee will also examine a cooperative fisheries enforcement agreement with France, which will target illegal fishing in the maritime areas adjacent to the French Southern and Antarctic Territories and the Australian territory of Heard Island and the McDonald Islands. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is a serious threat to this marine environment and the sustainability of valuable fish stocks. The agreement will allow enforcement activities, including boarding, inspection, hot pursuit, apprehension, seizure and investigation of fishing vessels believed to have violated fishing laws to be undertaken by one party in the territory of the other.

The third treaty to be examined by the Committee is an agreement between Australia and Slovenia on the provision of health care, which will provide reciprocal access to the health care system of the other country for visitors and temporary residents. Australia has a number of similar agreements with countries that have a high standard of health care equivalent to that in Australia. Under the agreement, an Australian visiting Slovenia who requires urgent treatment will be provided with the same quality of treatment as would be given to a Slovenian with a similar condition.

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM

10.00am – 11.10am, Monday, 15 March 2010

Venue: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra

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| 10.00am | Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) |
| 10.30am | Agreement Concerning the Provision of Health Care between Australia and Slovenia |
| 10.50am | Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement of Fisheries Laws between Australia and France in the Maritime Areas Adjacent to the French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Heard Island and the McDonald Islands |

This hearing will be broadcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>
Further information is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/jsct

MEDIA CONTACTS

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