



Public hearings – Wyong (Mon 24 Feb) & Lake Macquarie (Tues 25 Feb)

**Inquiry into ageing - public hearings
on NSW central coast & Hunter**

The NSW central coast and Hunter region will host the second and third days of public hearings of the House of Representatives Committee on Ageing's inquiry into long-term strategies to address the ageing of Australia's population.

Hearings will be held in **Wyong** and **Speers Point (Lake Macquarie)** on Monday and Tuesday next week. The schedule of expected witnesses appears below.

The House Ageing Committee, chaired by Dr Andrew Southcott MP, was established to tackle long-term planning issues regarding the ageing of Australia's population. The Committee has received more than 120 submissions for this inquiry. These, and further background information about the inquiry, can be found on the committee website at: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ageing/strategies/index.htm

Coastal areas such as the NSW central coast have become 'hot spots' for ageing issues.

"It is clear that the ageing of Australia's population will have a profound impact on Australia, in terms of social, economic and political activity," Dr Southcott said. "Areas such as the NSW central coast have become 'hot spots' for a range of ageing issues, with older people flocking to the area."

Nationally, population ageing will have an impact on economic growth, savings, investment and consumption, labour markets, pensions, taxation and intergenerational transfers. In the social policy area, population aging affects health and health care, family composition and living arrangements, housing and migration. Politically, population ageing may influence voting patterns and representation.

"In comparison to other developed countries, Australia is well placed to deal with an ageing population," Dr Southcott said. "However, this does not mean we can be complacent. This inquiry is a significant part of the process of laying the strong foundations that can be built on to meet the future needs of all Australians."

HEARING PROGRAMS

Monday 24 February 2003, Wyong Shire Council Committee Room, 16 Healy Street, Wyong

9.00am – 9.40am Central Coast Area Health (Mr John Blackwell, CEO)
9.40am – 10.20am Professor Irene Stein
10.30am – 11.10am Wyong Shire Council
11.10am – 11.50am Central Coast Urban Division of General Practice
11.50am – 12.30pm Aged and Community Services Australia (Central Coast)

Tuesday 25 February 2003, Lake Macquarie City Council, Councillor's Work Room, Main Rd, Speers Point

9.00am – 9.40am Hunter Area Health Service
9.40am – 10.20am Lake Macquarie City Council
10.30am – 11.10am Professor Julie Byles
11.10am – 11.50am Aged and Community Services Australia (Hunter)
11.50am – 12.30pm Lorraine Dunn

For comment, contact Dr Andrew Southcott on (08) 8374 0511

For information and/or copies of submissions, contact the inquiry secretariat, on (02) 6277 4613, or visit the inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ageing>