



Committee reviews controversial anti-counterfeiting treaty

Federal Parliament’s Treaties Committee will examine the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) at a public hearing in Canberra on Monday 19th March.

The ACTA has become increasingly controversial, with significant public protests in both the US and Europe, particularly with regard to restrictions the treaty is perceived to place on information exchange over the Internet.

The agreement is designed to create robust Intellectual Property (IP) enforcement standards. These standards are aimed at reducing the international trade in goods infringing IP, particularly in counterfeit trademarks and pirated copyright products.

Supporters of the ACTA consider to it be an important initiative, as existing IP enforcement standards in the World Trade Organisation have been insufficient to restrict the international trade in counterfeit and pirated materials, particularly in the digital era. The ACTA will provide a mechanism for member countries to work cooperatively with each other to achieve effective IP enforcement.

Committee chair, Mr Kelvin Thomson MP, said the committee will be examining the agreement to gather as much information as possible, given that it has inspired such a level of protest.

“The committee understands that this is a controversial treaty nationally and internationally and is interested in hearing all points of view”, Mr Thomson said.

“This will be the first of two public hearings where interested parties can present their arguments both in support of and against this treaty.”

Public Hearing: Monday 19 March 2012, Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House Canberra — All welcome

- 9:30am** **Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement**
 Australian Libraries Copyright Committee and Australian Digital Alliance
- 10:00am** **Australian Copyright Council**
- 10:30am** **Australian Recording Industry Association**
Australian Independent Record Labels’ Association
Music Industry Piracy Investigations Ltd
Australian Music Retailers’ Association
- 11:00am** **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**
- 12:00pm** **Protocol amending the Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income**
Department of the Treasury.

The hearing will be broadcast through http://www.aph.gov.au/News_and_Events/Watch_Parliament

Copies of the *National Interest Analysis* and treaty texts are available under Treaties tabled on 21 November 2011 at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm>. The next public hearing for this treaty will be on Friday, 23rd March in Canberra

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

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