



**Part One**

**INTRODUCTION**





## **The Inquiry**

### **Establishment of the Inquiry**

- 1.1 On 17 June 1998, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Philip Ruddock MP, requested that the Committee inquire into the entry arrangements for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. That inquiry lapsed when the Parliament was prorogued. On 16 December 1998 the Minister re-referred the inquiry to the Committee. The terms of reference are at page xi
- 1.2 The predicted numbers of visitors to the Games are expected to place significant pressure on Australia's entry and exit arrangements. In addition, Australia has made special provisions for the visit of accredited Olympic and Paralympic Family Members. These provisions represent a departure from Australia's usual visitor arrangements, albeit for a short time and for a clearly defined group. With the international spotlight on Australia, the Committee was concerned that these arrangements work effectively to facilitate visitor movement, to provide a positive image of Australia, while at the same time maintaining Australia's border integrity.
- 1.3 The Committee reviewed immigration entry arrangements to Australia proposed for the Games and the ability of these arrangements to cope with the special needs of visitors to the Games.

## Conduct of the Inquiry

1.4 The Committee advertised the inquiry, inviting written submissions, on 27 June 1998 in *The Australian*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the *Canberra Times*, and on the Parliament of Australia internet site on 21 January 1999. The Committee received 46 submissions from the 28 organisations or individuals listed at Appendix A. The Committee also held public hearings in :

- Canberra            5 February 1999;  
                              9 August 1999; and
- Sydney                2 & 3 March 1999.

The list of witnesses is at Appendix B and exhibits are listed at Appendix C.

1.5 Members of the Committee were briefed on immigration operations during a visit to Sydney International Airport and the Circular Quay Passenger Terminal on 3 August 1998. They were also briefed by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) on 8 March 1999 on a number of Games-related issues.

## The Report

1.6 Evidence provided to the Committee was weighted towards arrivals at Sydney and its International Airport, which is expected to be the main point of entry for most people visiting Australia for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

1.7 The Report first outlines (in Chapter 2) the general parameters of temporary entry provisions without covering in detail the operation of Australia's visa system on which the Committee reported in 1996 in *Australia's visa system for visitors*. Subsequent chapters of this report examine:

- the specific arrangements being made to facilitate the arrival and departure of accredited Olympic and Paralympic Family Members (Chapters 3, 4);
- arrangements being made to inform visitors of Australia's entry requirements at the time of the Games (Chapter 5); and
- the special requirements expected to be generated by the Games, and the arrangements proposed to accommodate these (Chapters 6-9).