



## Australia 2042

### ***What will Australia look like in 40 years?***

What will Australia's age profile look like in 2042? What implications does that have for us, and for future Australians? And how will we get there from here?

These are questions at the nub of the brief given to the new House of Representatives Committee on Ageing: *to develop long-term strategies to address the ageing of Australia's population over the next 40 years.*

In 2042 it is projected that Australia's population will be some 25 million people (around 30 per cent greater than now). Importantly, the distribution of that population between age groups will change markedly from today.

Overall, there will be more older people and fewer younger people (further details are contained in the article which follows).

This has implications not just for obvious areas such as aged care, health care and retirement incomes, but also for a range of other policy areas, including workforce participation, education, housing, tourism and recreation.

The Chair of the House Committee on Ageing, Dr Andrew Southcott, is this week attending the national conference of Aged and Community Services Australia, in Adelaide.

Dr Southcott says: "The one thing we can be pretty well sure of is what the population will look like in 40 years time. Population structures tend to be a bit like aircraft carriers - it takes a long time for them to turn around.

"The ageing of the baby boomers means that the government now, and the community, have to take steps to plan for what we know is going to happen in the future."

The inquiry will build on the work of the Government's Intergenerational Report (see article) and encourage community discussion of the issues.

"The issues raised by an ageing population are not the sole responsibility of the Government, but require ongoing action by all sectors of the community working together," Dr Southcott said.

"The Committee is encouraging interested members of the public and stakeholders to submit their views and ideas to assist the Committee in identifying timely and effective strategies to meet the future needs of all Australians."

**For comment, contact Dr Andrew Southcott on (08) 8374 0511, (mob) 0419 866 699**

**For information and/or copies of submissions**, contact the inquiry secretariat, on (02) 6277 2336, or visit the inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ageing>

*Following is a two-page article from the latest edition of About the House magazine, which contains further background information about the issues being explored in the inquiry*