



Treaties Committee approves Singapore's continued helicopter deployment at Oakey

Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee has today tabled a report approving the continued deployment of a Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) helicopter squadron at the Army Aviation Centre in Oakey, Queensland.

The report approves the *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Singapore concerning the Location of a Republic of Singapore Air Force Helicopter Squadron at the Australian Army Aviation Centre Oakey done at Singapore on 1 June 2012*.

Committee chair, Kelvin Thomson said the agreement will continue an important arrangement which has been ongoing since 1997.

"Australia benefits from this arrangement as strengthening the RSAF's capability makes Singapore a more effective coalition partner and contributor to regional security. Given the lack of its own domestic training areas, Singapore greatly values its access to the AAC, and this agreement is a major element of our contribution to the bilateral defence relationship. Access is vital to the RSAF as it enables them to develop and maintain their military capability," Mr Thomson said.

"The Singaporeans have been 'model tenants'. Apart from indirect economic benefits that help the local community, Singapore's commercial obligations as stated in the agreement are more than being fulfilled."

The Treaties Committee has also approved another two Tax Information Exchange Agreements – known as TIEAs – with Bahrain and Andorra.

"The Committee has now reviewed a number of these TIEAs and experience has found them to be effective. The Australian Taxation Office provided some tangible examples. For instance, Australia has TIEAs with the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, the Isle of Man and Jersey. As of August 2012, six amended tax assessments worth \$52 million were issued using these agreements," Mr Thomson said.

"Furthermore, the TIEAs act as a deterrent to those who would otherwise seek to minimise their taxation commitments through transfers to low-taxation jurisdictions."

The committee's views on these treaties, as well as the *Agreement Establishing the International Fund for Agricultural Development*, are covered in Report 129 which is available on the committee's

website: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsct/index.htm or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Media contact: Mr Kelvin Thomson MP (Mr Anthony Cianflone) (03) 9350 5777

Background:

Committee Secretariat

(02) 6277 4002