



Review of Treaty on the Anglo-Australian Telescope

The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, chaired by Dr Andrew Southcott MP, will hear evidence on a supplementary Agreement with the United Kingdom concerning the future funding and use of the Anglo-Australian Telescope (AAT) on Monday (5 September).

The AAT operated by the Anglo-Australian Observatory is located at the Siding Spring mountain, near Coonabarabran in NSW. In addition to the AAT, the mountain hosts other telescopes from a number of institutions and has developed into Australia's premier facility for optical and infra-red astronomy. As its name suggests, the Anglo-Australian Observatory is a national facility shared with the United Kingdom and which other countries are also able to use. As the facility is always in high demand, use of the Observatory is allocated based on the merit of proposed research programs.

"The supplementary agreement will allow the United Kingdom to phase out participation and funding of the Anglo-Australian Telescope over the next five years, in which case Australia would have sole ownership of the facility by 2010," Dr Southcott said.

The Observatory through international collaboration has been involved in major surveys collecting information about tens of thousands of stars and hundreds of thousands of galaxies. These include the Two-Degree Field Galaxy Redshift Survey, a galaxy survey which mapped more than 221 000 galaxies in space; the Two-Degree Field Quasar Survey of 20 000 quasars or bright cores of distant galaxies which will help to understand how the universe developed; and the RAdial Velocity Experiment which will collect data on 80 000 stars to help reconstruct the history of the Milky Way.

The public hearing will be held in **Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra** on **Monday, 5 September 2005** from **10.00 am**. A public hearing program is attached. The public hearing will be broadcast on the House Monitoring Service on Channel 10, radio frequency 98.3MHz and on the Parliament House website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/live/webcast3.asp#>

Further information about the inquiry is available on the Committee's website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/9august2005/index.htm>

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PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM

Treaties tabled on 9 August 2005

Monday, 5 September 2005

10.00 am to 10.20 am

Committee Room 2R1

10.00 am Supplementary Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia concerning the Anglo-Australian Optical Telescope, at Siding Spring, New South Wales, Australia

10.20 am **Close**