



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade  
Defence Sub Committee

Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw  
SubComm Chair: The Hon Arch Bevis

**MEDIA ALERT**

Issued: 18 Sept 2008

# **Inquiry into F-111 Deseal/Reseal personnel**

***Public hearing in Canberra on Friday 19 September 2008***

The Defence Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade will hear again from the Defence Department and Veteran Affairs Department at a public hearing into F-111 Deseal/Reseal workers and their families on Friday 19 September 2008.

On 21 July, the Deputy Chief of the Air Force, Air Vice-Marshal Geoff Brown, told the federal parliamentary inquiry that possibly up to 2000 people, including about 460 RAAF personnel, may have suffered illness and other medical conditions related to the chemicals used for cleaning the fuel tanks of F-111 aircraft from 1973 to 2000.

The Sub-Committee is investigating the overall administration and handling of the ex-gratia payment scheme, used in acknowledgement for the appalling working conditions faced by personnel in the programs. It is also assessing whether the Health Care Scheme implemented to treat the resulting health conditions of personnel was adequate and consistent with the findings of the Study of Health Outcomes in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel (SHOAMP) conducted by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The Committee will again hear from representatives from the Department of Defence and Department of Veterans Affairs. Witnesses from the Defence Force Welfare Association and Returned and Services League of Australia will also appear.

Chair of the Defence Sub-Committee, Arch Bevis, welcomed the response from Defence and hoped the inquiry can help Defence with resolving issues for many of the families affected. He noted that "it is a difficult and complex issue that we are all grappling with" and recognised that the Inquiry "provides an important opportunity for those who were involved, who have first-hand experience and who participated in the deseal-reseal program in its various guises and in different parts, to present their case".

**A public hearing will be held in the Main Committee Room at  
Parliament House Canberra, on Friday 19 September 2008**

The hearing will be webcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Further information on the hearings, including a Full Program and transcripts of previous hearings are available on the Committee's inquiry website at:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/deseal\\_reseal/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/deseal_reseal/index.htm)

**For media inquiries**, contact the Sub-Committee Chairman, The Hon Arch Bevis MP on 02 6277 4518 or (07) 3356 1555.

**For all other inquiries**, contact the Senior Research Officer, Muzammil Ali, on (02) 6277 2313 or visit the committee website at [www.aph.gov.au/jfadt](http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt)