

Introduction

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report contains advice to Parliament on the review by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties of a series of proposed treaty actions tabled on 17 and 24 June 2003, and 12 August 2003 specifically:

17 June 2003

- *Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Croatia on Social Security, done at Zagreb on 13 May 2003¹*

24 June 2003

- *Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances 2000, done at London, 15 March 2000²*

12 August 2003

- *Agreement between Australia and the Kingdom of Belgium on the Gainful Employment of Certain Dependants of Diplomatic and Consular Personnel, done at Sydney on 19 November 2002;*

1 See *Senate Journal*, 17 June 2003, p. 1860 and *House of Representatives Votes and Proceedings*, 17 June 2003, p. 962.

2 See *Senate Journal*, 24 June 2003, p. 1937 and *House of Representatives Votes and Proceedings*, 24 June 2003, p. 1008.

- *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium on “Working Holiday” Arrangements, done at Canberra on 20 November 2002; and*
- *Protocol, done at Sydney on 30 June 2003, concerning the Bougainville Transition Team made pursuant to the Agreement, done at Port Moresby on 5 December 1997, between Australia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu concerning the Neutral Truce Monitoring Group for Bougainville, as amended by the Protocol, done at Port Moresby on 29 April 1998.*³

Briefing documents

- 1.2 The advice in this report refers to National Interest Analyses (NIAs) prepared for these proposed treaty actions. Copies of the NIAs are available from the Committee’s website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/index.htm> or may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat. These documents were prepared by the Government agency (or agencies) responsible for the administration of Australia’s responsibilities under each treaty.
- 1.3 Copies of treaty actions and NIAs can also be obtained from the Australian Treaties Library maintained on the internet by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The Australian Treaties Library is accessible through the Committee’s website or directly at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat>.

Conduct of the Committee’s review

- 1.4 The Committee’s review of the treaty actions canvassed in this report was advertised in the national press and on the Committee’s website.⁴ In addition, letters inviting comment were sent to all State Premiers and Chief Ministers and to individuals who have expressed an interest in being kept informed of proposed treaty actions such as these. A list of submissions and their authors is at Appendix A.

3 See *Senate Journal*, 12 August 2003, p.2089 and *House of Representatives Votes and Proceedings*, 12 August 2003, p. 1064.

4 The Committee’s review of the proposed treaty actions was advertised in *The Australian* on 20 August 2003. Members of the public were advised on how to obtain relevant information and invited to submit their views to the Committee.

- 1.5 The Committee also took evidence at a public hearing held on 18 August 2003. A list of witnesses who gave evidence at the public hearing is at Appendix B. A transcript of evidence from the public hearing can be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's internet site at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/index/htm>.