

Voting rights inquiry



Expatriate advocacy organisation the Southern Cross Group (SCG) last week urged Australians living abroad to contribute their views to an inquiry being held into the Australian electoral system.

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters are calling on any interested parties to make submissions by June 2.

The SCG's Australian co-ordinator John MacGregor said many expats did not understand how moving abroad affected their voting rights and the inquiry was an important opportunity for the Australian diaspora to give feedback on their experiences of the electoral system from overseas.

The SCG have been lobbying the government to provide better information about overseas Australians' voting rights for some time.

"A much clearer message needs to be communicated by government agencies," MacGregor said.

"People leaving Australia need to be told in no uncertain terms: if you don't fill out and send in the right Australian Electoral Commission form within three years of moving to live overseas, it is extremely likely you will become disenfranchised for the entire period that you live abroad."

To make a submission, email jscem@aph.gov.au or fax 0061-2-6277 4710.

TNT MAGAZINE

UK

MAY 22 2006

ISSUE 1186