



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

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

MEDIA ALERT
Issued: 19 September 2008

Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw
Sub Comm. Chair: Michael Danby MP

DFAT to be recalled to discuss Australia's relationship with ASEAN

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is being recalled to continue its evidence to Parliament's Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee is inquiring into Australia's relationship with ASEAN.

Announcing the public hearing, scheduled for Monday, 22 September at 11.00 am, Sub-Committee Chairman Michael Danby said the committee has more issues to discuss with the department.

"ASEAN hopes to create an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 and the committee will be exploring how this might affect Australia's relationship with this most important trading partner." Mr Danby said. "The committee is also interested in Australia's participation in various ASEAN-related forums such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum."

The 10 ASEAN nations are the sixth most important export destination for Australian goods and services, and Australia is the eighth most important source of imports from ASEAN. Representing a population of around 575 million, the ASEAN nations are an important trading partner for Australia, worth over \$55 billion in 2007.

Along with exploring ways to improve Australia's involvement in ASEAN and opportunities to enhance the regional economy and improve cultural links, the committee will examine the security of the region and Australian involvement.

The public hearing in **Committee Room 2S3** Parliament House in Canberra will commence at 11.00 am and will be webcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

The program will continue with public hearings in Melbourne on Thursday, 2 October and in Sydney on Thursday, 6 November. Submissions to the inquiry and transcripts of the public hearings are available on the Committee's website.

For media inquiries, contact the Sub-Committee Chairman, Michael Danby MP on 02 6277 8126.

For all other inquiries, contact the Sub-Committee Secretary, John Carter, on 02 6277 4306 or visit the committee website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/asean1/index.htm>