



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Human Rights Sub-Committee

MEDIA RELEASE
Issued: 2 May 2013

Chair: Hon Laurie Ferguson MP
Deputy: Hon Philip Ruddock MP

Human Rights Committee investigates modern day slavery *Public Hearings on the 8 and 9 May*

Australia's efforts to address slavery, slavery-like conditions and the trafficking of persons will be examined at by the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. This examination will take place at two public hearings in Melbourne on the 8 and 9 May.

Human Rights Sub-Committee chair, Laurie Ferguson, says "victims of this heinous crime can be found in homes, in our workplaces and in our communities both domestically and internationally."

"These public hearings will enable the committee to gain a further understanding of the extent of modern day slavery, look at how victims are protected, the services that are provided as part of victim support and how to effectively prosecute and appropriately punish the offenders."

Mr Ferguson also said, "We need to work collaboratively across governments within Australia and abroad, and with businesses and individuals to drastically reduce instances of slavery and trafficking. Increased community awareness and engagement by all these groups is a key component to combatting modern day slavery."

The witnesses appearing before the Sub-Committee will include; Dr Anne Gallagher AO, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Victoria Police, Hagar Australia, Project Respect, Plan International Australia, Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Australia, the National Tertiary Education Union, and Slavery Links Australia.

The public hearings will be on **Wednesday, 8 May 2013** and **Thursday, 9 May 2013** from **9.00 am** in Room G.3, Parliament of Victoria, 55 St Andrews Place, Melbourne.

The hearing will be audio webcast live on: www.aph.gov.au/live

Members of the public are welcome to attend. For a program and more details, visit the Committee's website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>

For media comment: please contact the Sub-Committee Chair, the Hon Laurie Ferguson MP on (02) 9829 7477 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 4290 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313, via email at jscfadt@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>