



## **Committee to examine potential reforms of national security legislation**

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security has commenced an inquiry into potential reforms of national security legislation.

The Government has asked the Committee to consider a package of national security ideas comprising proposals for telecommunications interception reform, telecommunications sector security reform and Australian intelligence community legislation reform. The Inquiry will include examination of:

- Lawful access to telecommunications, to ensure that investigative tools are not lost as telecommunications providers change their business practices and begin to delete data more regularly.
- Safeguards and privacy protections, including clarifying the roles of the Commonwealth and state ombudsmen in overseeing telecommunications interception by law enforcement agencies.
- An authorised intelligence operations scheme, to afford ASIO officers the same protections which currently apply to officers of the Australian Federal Police for authorised operations.

Among a range of other matters, the Committee will consult on measures to address security risks posed to the telecommunications sector, and whether the Government needs to institute obligations on the Australian telecommunications industry to protect their networks from unauthorised interference.

The Chair of the Committee, the Hon Anthony Byrne MP, has welcomed the referral of the inquiry, stating that: "It is vital that our security laws keep pace with the rapid developments in technology". Commenting on the importance of public input into the Parliament's examination of the potential reforms, Mr Byrne said the Committee's inquiry will give the public an opportunity to have a say in the development of new laws in the critical area of national security.

The Committee invites interested persons and organisations to make submissions addressing the terms of reference by **Monday, 6 August 2012**. The full terms of reference are available on the Committee's website at: [www.aph.gov.au/pjcis](http://www.aph.gov.au/pjcis).

The Government has provided the Committee with a discussion paper which accompanies the terms of reference and describes the reform proposals. The discussion paper is available on the Committee's web site. Submitters are strongly encouraged to have regard to the discussion paper in the preparation of submissions for the Committee's inquiry.

**For more information**, visit the Committee's website at [www.aph.gov.au/pjcis](http://www.aph.gov.au/pjcis) or contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 2360.