



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

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

Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw
SubComm Chair: The Hon Arch Bevis

MEDIA ALERT

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F-111 Deseal/Reseal health studies

Health Studies released on Committee website

The Defence Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade is currently conducting an inquiry into F-111 Deseal/Reseal workers and their families.

Chair of the Defence Sub-Committee, Mr Arch Bevis said "as part of the Inquiry, the Committee has received a number of health studies. These may be of interest to former F-111 aircraft maintenance workers, some of whom may have been exposed to chemicals while working for the RAAF from 1973 to 2000 at RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland".

The studies, published by various Government and academic sources, provide updated information on the effect of these chemicals.

One of the studies focuses exclusively on the effect of the chemical desealant SR51 on human DNA. The chemical was used in first Deseal/Reseal program at Amberley from 1977 – 1982. It confirms that SR-51 and its major solvent components produce toxic effects on mitochondrial particles used in the study.

A second study also focuses on the effects of exposure to SR51.

A third study which was recently published and is available on the Committee's website. This, the *Third Study of Mortality and Cancer Incidence in Aircraft Maintenance Personnel*, shows a 44% increase in overall cancer incidence and a four-fold increase in lip cancer.

The Committee previously released a study on psychological effects on partners of Deseal/Reseal personnel.

To explore this evidence, the Committee will be holding further public hearings into the matter.

A public hearing will be held in Committee Room 2R1 at Parliament House Canberra, on 16 and 17 April 2009

The hearing will be webcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Further information on the hearings, including a Full Program and transcripts of previous hearings are available on the Committee's inquiry website at:

http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/deseal_reseal/index.htm

For media inquiries, contact the Sub-Committee Chairman, The Hon Arch Bevis MP on 02 6277 4518 or (07) 3356 1555.

For all other inquiries, contact the Senior Research Officer, Muzammil Ali, on (02) 6277 2313 or visit the committee website at www.aph.gov.au/jfadt