

## Read, Shane (REPS)

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**From:** Merran Loewenthal [loewenthal@schwank.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, 5 July 2002 2:13 AM  
**To:** JSCEM@aph.gov.au  
**Cc:** loewenthal@schwank.com  
**Subject:** Submission

From: Merran Loewenthal  
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Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters	
Submission No.	114
Date Received	5/7/02
Secretary	S. Palmi

Address:

Stock Exchange Building,  
Wipplingerstr. 34/110  
A-1010 Vienna, Austria

Message:

To: The Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee  
on Electoral Matters  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

Dear Sir,

This submission is in response to the JSCEM's invitation for public comment as part of its Inquiry into the Conduct of the 2001 Federal Election.

Even after more than 25 years away from Australia, I have kept my Australian citizenship. Now that Sec. 17 has been repealed, I shall probably apply for Austrian citizenship as well, to which I am entitled through my marriage with an Austrian citizen. The existence of Sec. 17 has been the only stumbling block to my application as I did not want to lose my Australian citizenship as so many other Australian women married to Austrians have done, due to wrong advice by the Austrian emigration authorities and lack of advice by the Australian embassy.

My 3 children have all Australian citizenship and the elder 2 are enjoying life in Australia, one of them studying at University there and the other working. There is a good chance they will stay there.

As I have not Austrian citizenship I have not been able to vote anywhere. In fact the last time I voted was in the English elections when I was working there in 1977/78 where to my surprise I was entitled to vote as a Commonwealth citizen.

Austria provides the right to vote for its citizens who live outside Austria and they make up a powerful group, many of them being very well known personalities.

I have no doubt that I shall spend more and more time in Australia, particularly if the children stay there.

I enjoy reading the Australian newspapers on the net, although some of the news is painful to read.

I was last registered in Balmain, Sydney, at my parents' flat, my last residence in Sydney before I left Australia in 1976. I visit Australia regularly, have family, friends and children there, bank accounts, investments and pay taxes.

Although I am not on the roll, as I discovered when I tried to vote some years ago at the Embassy in Vienna, I would be interested in getting back on to it.

Yours faithfully,

Merran Loewenthal