

Introduction

Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report contains the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties' review of treaty actions tabled on 19 June 2012 and 26 June 2012.
- 1.2 These treaty actions are proposed for ratification and are examined in the order of tabling:
 - **Tabled 19 June 2012**
 - ⇒ *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Republic of Singapore concerning the Location of a Republic of Singapore Air Force Helicopter Squadron at the Australian Army Aviation Centre Oakey done at Singapore on 1 June 2012*
 - ⇒ *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain on the Exchange of Information with Respect to Taxes done at Manama on 15 December 2012*
 - ⇒ *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Principality of Andorra on the Exchange of Information with Respect to Taxes done at New York on 24 September 2011*
 - **Tabled 26 June 2012**
 - ⇒ *Agreement Establishing the International Fund for Agricultural Development (Rome, 13 June 1976)*
- 1.3 The Committee's resolution of appointment empowers it to inquire into any treaty to which Australia has become signatory, on the treaty being tabled in Parliament.

- 1.4 The treaties, and matters arising from them, are evaluated to ensure that ratification is in the national interest, and that unintended or negative effects on Australians will not arise.
- 1.5 Prior to tabling, major treaty actions are subject to a *National Interest Analysis* (NIA), prepared by Government. This document considers arguments for and against the treaty, outlines the treaty obligations and any regulatory or financial implications, and reports the results of consultations undertaken with State and Territory Governments, Federal and State and Territory agencies, and with industry or non-government organisations.
- 1.6 A Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) may accompany the NIA. The RIS provides an account of the regulatory impact of the treaty action where adoption of the treaty will involve a change in the regulatory environment for Australian business. The treaties examined in this report do not require an RIS.
- 1.7 The Committee takes account of these documents in its examination of the treaty text, in addition to other evidence taken during the inquiry program.
- 1.8 Copies of each treaty and its associated documentation may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website at:
http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsct/under_review.htm

Conduct of the Committee's review

- 1.9 The treaty actions reviewed in this report were advertised on the Committee's website from the date of tabling. Submissions for the treaties tabled on 19 June and 26 June 2012 were requested by Friday, 27 July 2012, with extensions available on request.
- 1.10 Invitations were made to all State Premiers, Chief Ministers and to the Presiding Officers of each Parliament to lodge submissions. The Committee also invited submissions from individuals and organisations with an interest in the particular treaty under review.
- 1.11 The Committee examined the witnesses on each treaty at a public hearing held in Canberra on 13 August 2012.

1.12 Transcripts of evidence from the public hearing may be obtained from the Committee Secretariat or accessed through the Committee's website under the treaty's tabling date, being:

■ **19 June 2012**

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsct/19june2012/hearings.htm

■ **26 June 2012**

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsct/26june2012/hearings.htm

1.13 A list of witnesses who appeared at the public hearings is at Appendix A.

