

MEDIA RELEASE

24 June 2008

Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Inquiry into the economic and security challenges facing Papua New Guinea and the island states of the southwest Pacific

Senator Mark Bishop, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, announced today that the committee is to inquire into the major economic and security challenges facing Papua New Guinea and the island states of the southwest Pacific.

This inquiry comes at a time when Australia is looking for opportunities to help countries in this region build a more secure and economically viable future.

The committee is seeking views from people who have an understanding of the major challenges facing these countries. The committee is particularly interested in hearing from businesses and organisations actively engaged in the region that, based on their experiences, are well placed to offer suggestions on how Australia can, in concrete and practical ways, assist these countries overcome economic difficulties.

In considering the security and economic challenges, the committee is to include an examination of:

- employment opportunities, labour mobility, education and skilling;
- barriers to trade, foreign investment, economic infrastructure, land ownership and private sector development; and
- current regional organisations such as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Secretariat of Pacific Community.

The closing date for submissions is 30 August 2008.

Enquiries:
Committee Secretariat
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

T: +61 2 6277 3535
F: +61 2 6277 5818
E: fadt.sen@aph.gov.au
W: www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/fadt_ctte/index.htm