

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 On 4 October 2005, the Senate referred the provisions of the Law and Justice Legislation Amendment (Video Link Evidence and Other Measures) Bill 2005 (the Bill) to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee for inquiry and report by 1 November 2005.

1.2 The Bill seeks to amend:

- the *Crimes Act 1914* to create new video link evidence provisions that apply to proceedings for terrorism and related offences; and
- the *Foreign Evidence Act 1994* to facilitate the use of foreign material as evidence in proceedings for terrorism and related offences.

1.3 The Bill also amends other legislation to, among other things, facilitate the sharing of DNA profiles between Australian law enforcement agencies over a national DNA database system.

Conduct of the inquiry

1.4 The committee advertised the inquiry in *The Australian* newspaper on 12 October 2005, and invited submissions by 17 October 2005. Details of the inquiry, the Bill, and associated documents were placed on the committee's website. The committee also wrote to around 40 organisations and individuals.

1.5 The committee received 7 submissions which are listed at Appendix 1. Submissions were placed on the committee's website for ease of access by the public.

1.6 The committee held a public hearing in Sydney on 21 October 2005. A list of witnesses who appeared at the hearing is at Appendix 2 and copies of the Hansard transcript are available through the Internet at <http://aph.gov.au/hansard>.

Acknowledgement

1.7 The committee thanks those organisations and individuals who made submissions and gave evidence at the public hearing.

Note on references

1.8 References in this report are to individual submissions as received by the committee, not to a bound volume. References to the committee Hansard are to the proof Hansard: page numbers may vary between the proof and the official Hansard transcript.

