



**FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS AND  
TRADE**

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Staffing Branch

29 March 1999

Dr John Challis

Dear Dr Challis,

I refer to your letter dated 12 March 1999 to the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade concerning entitlements of partners of departmental officers. The Secretary has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Consistent with Australian Public Service practice, the definition of 'spouse' includes de facto relationships, including same sex partners. Recognition of and thus entitlements for a spouse are automatic where the spouse normally resides with the officer.

I hope this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely

Doug Chester  
Assistant Secretary  
Staffing Branch