



Vol 18 Issue 8
16 - 30 June 2007

In this issue

- Bulletin Board
- Tourism desperate for employees
- Services sector needs separate ministerial portfolio
- Three new inquiries for Public Works Committee
- Free downloads for CB Readers
- Need to better engage young people in electoral system
- Community broadcasting valuable in the media landscape
- Greenpeace sees renewable energy as the answer
- Go ahead for security treaty between Australia and Indonesia
- Nursing mothers in the HoR will not be allowed proxy vote

Bulletin Board

Sitting Dates August 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Both Houses						

Reports tabled

Provisions of the Great Barrier Reef Amendment Bill 2007

Senate Environment, Communications, IT and the Arts Committee, presented out-of-sitting on 15 June after the Senate adjourned.

Civics and Electoral Education

Joint Electoral Matters Committee, tabled 18 June

Provisions of the National Health Amendment (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) Bill 2007

Senate Community Affairs Committee, tabled 18 June

Provisions of the Fisheries Legislation Amendment Bill 2007

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, tabled 18 June

Current vacancies: Workforce challenges facing the Australian

Tourism desperate for employees

(HoR Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation Committee - Report)

Australia's service industry is experiencing steady growth, but without the corresponding growth in the number of available workers, a parliamentary committee has found.

Many tourism employers are desperately seeking staff from managers to waiters, housekeepers and chefs, Committee chair Gary Hardgrave (Lib, Qld) told Parliament when tabling his Committee's report ***Current Vacancies: Workforce Challenges facing the Australian tourism sector.***

The tourism industry employed around 550,000 people, contributes 5.6% of total employment and 3.9% of total GDP. It is an important industry to Australia both economically and culturally, and an area of enormous opportunity for Australia. However, the report says, it struggles to maintain competitiveness with other sectors in terms of pay and conditions.

The Committee has made a series of recommendations aimed at positioning the industry to better meet the challenges of its high workforce needs, and draws attention to the disparity in data and the difficulties this causes in terms of workforce planning.

Amongst the Committee's 25 recommendations are:

- the development of a seasonal workforce management plan and destination management planning
- the extension of working holiday visas of up to two years for backpackers who work in rural or regional areas and who have undertaken a tertiary course and work placement in an area of skills demand (the Committee is aware that there is little departmental support for this recommendation)
- addressing the lengthy delays in the issuing of business visas (often longer than the tourist season)

tourism sector

HoR Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce participation Committee, tabled 18 June

Servicing our future; inquiry into the current and future directions of Australia's services export sector

HoR Economics, Finance and Public Administration Committee, tabled 18 June

Corporations Legislation Amendment (Simpler Regulatory System) Bill 2007

Joint Corporations and Financial Services Committee, tabled 19 June

Government schedule of responses to parliamentary committee reports of the House of Representatives

Response to the Speaker's schedule of 7 December 2006, tabled 21 June

Government schedule of responses to parliamentary committee reports of the Senate

Response to the President's schedule of 7 December 2006, tabled 21 June

Treaties tabled on 6,7 and 27 February 2007 (five treaty actions)

Report No. 85 of the Joint Treaties Committee, tabled 21 June

Alterations to the Register of Members' Interests during the period 29 March to 20 June 2007

HoR Members' Interests Committee, tabled 21 June

Transparency and accountability of Commonwealth funding and expenditure

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee, tabled 21 June

ESTIMATES COMMITTEES**2007-08 Budget Estimates**

Reports from all Senate standing committees tabled on 19 June

Additional Information, 2007-08 Budget Estimates**Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee**

tabled 21 June

Senate Environment, Communications, IT and the Arts Committee

tabled 21 June

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee

tabled 21 June

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee

tabled 21 June

DELEGATION REPORTS

- amendment of the Migration Occupations on Demand List - considered to restrictive by the Committee - to include tourism occupations in areas of skills demand where these occupations meet recognized national training standards
- establishment of an industry leaders' forum to develop and focus on career paths in tourism
- investigation of barriers to the participation of older workers in the tourism workforce
- analysis of staff turnover costs and staff retention incentives in an industry which currently has up to 400 per cent turnover
- establishment of a tourism industry long service leave scheme which can allow workers to pursue a career path with multiple employers
- to change the funding regime for national training to one that is competence rather than time based
- the establishment of a national body which would be responsible for recognizing and accrediting individuals against prescribed qualifications and training

Labor members of the Committee, whilst agreeing with the report, attached additional comments. These comments highlighted the government's a reliance on 457 visas instead of providing industry career opportunities, as well as the adverse effect of the Government's Work Choices policy, which they argued acted to lower the wages for an already low-paid sector of the economy.

The report has been welcomed by the Investment and Financial Services Association, which said the findings are consistent with its own research.

[Link to full report:](#)

Services sector needs separate ministerial portfolio

(HoR Economics, Finance and Public Administration Committee - Report)

A parliamentary committee report has called for the establishment of a minister for the services sector, in order to give the sector enhanced government recognition and coordination.

The service sector dominates Australia's economy, despite attention usually being focused on the agriculture and mining sectors. It accounts for around 75% of output and 85% of employment, as well as 20% of total exports, and is becoming increasingly important to our economy.

Committee Chair Bruce Baird (Lib, NSW) , *"Many people were not aware that the services sector accounted for the majority of the economy's output and employment. Export of services were worth around \$42 billion",* he said, *"with opportunities to significantly increase this figure in the future".*

"The report's 14 recommendations are aimed at strengthening the sector for the future", Mr Baird said.

Deputy chair of the Committee, Sharon Bird (ALP, NSW) said that it *"became glaringly obvious throughout the inquiry that to some extent in Australia we are just getting on and doing it and there is not enough analysis of what works and what does not work, what the barriers are and what the government could do to intervene."*

One of the report's key recommendations calls for more federal and state resources to be dedicated to eradicating rogue tourism operators.

Australian Parliamentary Delegation to the Republic of Malta and Spain 14-24 April 2007 and **The official visit to Kuwait by the President of the Senate 24-26 April 2007**, tabled 18 June

Parliamentary Delegation to the 2007 Presidential Election in East Timor, 7-10 April, tabled 19 June

Government Responses

Review of the Defence annual report 2004-05. Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. Response tabled 21 June

Price of petrol in Australia Report of the Senate Economics Committee. Response tabled 21 June

Perspectives on the future of the harvest labour force Report of the Senate Employment, Workplace relations and Education Committee. Response tabled 21 June

Changes in Membership

Joint Treaties Committee
Senator Birmingham replaces Senator Trood

Legislation Referred to Senate Committees

Provisions of the Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Amendment Bill 2007.

Referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee for report by 1 August

Provisions of the International Trade Integrity Bill 2007

Referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee for report by 1 August

Trade Practices Amendment (Predatory Pricing) Bill 2007

Referred to the Senate Economics Committee for report by 1 August

Provisions of the Trade Practices Legislation Amendment Bill (No.1) 2007

Referred to the Senate Economics Committee for report by 1 August

Provisions of the Social Security Amendment (2007 Measures No. 1) Bill 2007

Referred to the Senate Employment, Workplace relations

Other key recommendations include:

- a program of migration to address lower skill shortages in industries like tourism
- higher priority to be given to services trade issues in future trade negotiations
- the establishment of a "Brand Australia Council" to enhance Australia's brand
- an independent review of the future of the inbound tourism industry
- a review of the competitiveness of student visas against international competitors

[Link to full report:](#)

Need to better engage young people in electoral system

(Joint Electoral Matters Committee - Report)

A joint parliamentary report has highlighted the need to better engage key sections of the population in electoral matters, particularly young people. Surveys have shown that Australians between the ages of 15 and 35 typically have limited knowledge of Australia's political history and political system and have little interest in Australian political affairs.

The Australian Electoral Commission has indicated that young and Indigenous Australians are more likely to be under-enrolled, while higher levels of informal voting are often evident among culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

"The Committee believes that its recommendations will lead to better informed citizens, who are more engaged in the issues that are important to them", Committee Chair Sophie Mirabella (Lib, Vic) said.

Key recommendations include:

- developing a short, focused electoral unit to be delivered to either Year 9 or 10 students and Year 11 and 12 students, in all secondary schools
- re-assessing the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate as it affects students from the remotest part of Australia
- improved training and guidelines for polling officials in communicating with Indigenous Australians
- reviewing the languages which the Australian Electoral Commission translates its information into - to reflect more recent migrant arrivals
- providing a programme of electoral education in the lead up to federal elections, which specifically targets areas of high informal voting

[Link to full report:](#)

Community broadcasting valuable in the media landscape

(HoR Communications, IT and the Arts Committee - Report)

A report examining key management and funding issues in the community broadcasting sector, tabled on 18 June, highlights the value of community broadcasting and the need for good governance.

and Education Committee for report by 30 July
Provisions of the Communications Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing and Datacasting) Bill 2007

Referred to the Senate Communications, IT and the Arts Committee for report by 30 July

Public Hearings

Certain aspects of the administration of the Australian Electoral Commission

Joint Electoral Matters Committee
 2 July Sydney
 3 July Canberra

Academic standards of school children

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee
 2 July Perth
 11 July Canberra (2S3)

Temporary business visas

Joint Migration Committee
 3 July Cairns

Future impact of serious and organized crime on Australian society

Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission
 5, 6 July Canberra (2S1)

Older people and the law

HoR Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
 16 July Brisbane
 17 July Buderim

Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Testing) Bill 2007 [Provisions]

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
 16 July Canberra
 17 July Sydney

Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee industry

HoR Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee
 25 July Wangaratta

Private equity markets

Senate Economics Committee
 25 July Sydney
 26 July Melbourne

SENATE ESTIMATES HEARINGS (2007-08 SUPPLEMENTARY)

GROUP A

Monday 12 and Tuesday 13 November

GROUP B

Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 November

Committee Chair, Jackie Kelly (Lib, NSW) described the community broadcasting sector as *"extremely valuable in our media landscape. The sector is the incubator of diverse and innovative programming, and is essentially the training ground for the commercial and national broadcasters"*.

"However, getting the governance right is the key to a robust and vibrant sector. This report's recommendations will ensure that the sector increases its management and financial planning skills, allowing stations to continue to broadcast their important local, diverse and independent programming," Mrs Kelly added.

The report, Tuning in to Community Broadcasting, makes a total of 14 recommendations, on key issues such as funding and management training including.

- an increase of \$10 million in core funding, which will primarily fund station manager positions;
- an increase in targeted funding, primarily to assist in the replacement of station equipment and infrastructure;
- development of a guiding template for the structure of station boards or management committees;
- an additional \$500,000 per year for four years, for the development and delivery of management training.

The report also calls upon the Australian Government to implement the recommendations regarding community television access to digital spectrum from the inquiry's first report, tabled in February 2007.

[Link to full report:](#)

Greenpeace sees renewable energy as the answer

(HoR Industry and Resources Committee - Inquiry evidence)

Presenting Greenpeace's clean energy scenario work to a parliamentary committee, Sven Teske, Director of the Renewable Energy Campaign for Greenpeace International, presented a summary of the work of 50 scientists and engineers on scenario modeling, showing renewable energy becoming competitive around 2015.

The joint work of Greenpeace International, the German Space Agency, the European Renewable Energy Council and the Global Wind Energy Council modeling system relied only on technology which is currently available (not renewable energy sources which are in the very early stages of development).

He said the *"Committee faces many difficult questions such as why Australia's greenhouse emissions are so high and why Australia signed Kyoto and is meeting the lax target but in fact has not ratified."*

Nuclear energy has been phased out of the equation, he said *"firstly, we think it is dangerous, polluting and cannot provide the amount of power actually needed to save the climate" and "besides all the environmental arguments against it, nuclear power is simply too slow to bring up the capacity."*

The logic behind the scenarios *"was basically efficiency an structural changes"*, he said. *"We need a lot of decentralised energy and also co-generation, which needs a little bit of infrastructure and the energy production will move a bit closer to the consumer."*

"Most of the renewable energy sources in the power sector are getting competitive between 2010 and 2020", he explained, *"with most of the power generation from renewables being competitive"*

Private equity markets

Senate Economics Committee.
Reporting date extended to 16 August

Three new inquiries for Public Works Committee

(Joint Public Works Committee - New Inquiries)

Robertson Barracks redevelopment

Darwin Robertson Barracks is the home of the Army's 1st Brigade. Proposed works to the Barracks, to extend and replicate existing facilities, fulfill requirements by the Australian Army in the strategic environment, meet the Government's Hardened and Networked Army initiative and the introduction of the Abrams tank fleet. Proposed cost is \$72.1 million plus GST.

Airborne early warning and control facilities, RAAF Base Tindal, NT

The Department of Defence Proposal will provide new infrastructure at RAAF Base Tindal to enable the new airborne early warning and control aircraft to operate effectively from base. It will enhance surveillance, air defence, fleet support and force coordination operation. The estimated out- turned cost of the proposal is \$64.2 million plus GST.

Refurbishment of staff apartments, Australian Embassy Complex in Tokyo

The proposal is for the refurbishment of 43 staff apartments at the Australian Embassy complex in Tokyo. The existing embassy complex was built in 1990 and works will include upgrading building services to ensure compliance with current building codes and enhanced amenity for tenants. The estimated cost of the project is \$22 million.

[Link to Committee website:](#)

Free downloads for CB Readers

including free subscription to Advocacy Update

with fossil fuels".

"There is no silver bullet for energy efficiency, as there are so many different technologies, but we need to develop them at the same time", he told the Committee.

"Legally binding targets for renewable energy are very, very important and must define a stable return for investors. The scheme must accelerate the market", he added.

In terms of jobs, he claimed that the 25 per cent renewable energy target for Australia would, on conservative estimates, create between 16,000 and 17,000 jobs.

Hearings continue.

[Link to the Committee website:](#)

Go ahead for security treaty between Australia and Indonesia

(Joint Standing Committee on Treaties)

Although federal parliament's Treaties Committee has recommended that the Australian Government ratify a security Treaty between Australia and Indonesia, it also took the opportunity to raise human rights concerns.

The Agreement between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Framework for Security Cooperation, also known as the Lombok Treaty, provides a foundation for cooperation between Australia and Indonesia on traditional and non-traditional security matters. It covers cooperation on defence as well as transnational crime, people trafficking and illegal fishing.

The Committee also recommended that the Australian Government continue to raise concerns about human rights in Indonesia.

- Continue to address widely expressed concerns about human rights in Indonesia with the Indonesian Government and in appropriate international fora;
- Increase transparency in defence cooperation agreements to provide assurance that Australian resources do not directly or indirectly support human rights abuses in Indonesia;
- Encourage the Indonesian Government to allow greater access for the media and human rights monitors in Papua;
- Engage in a campaign to increase public support for the Australia-Indonesia relationship. This campaign would have the goal of increasing awareness of democratic reforms in Indonesia and the value to Australian security of strong relations with Indonesia.

One of the key provisions of the treaty -Article 2 (3) - generated some concern. It is a commitment not to support or participate in any activities which constitute a threat to the stability, sovereignty or territorial integrity of the other party. However, the Committee was satisfied that it would not restrict the rights of private citizens to rally in support of Papuan independence.

[Link to full report:](#)

Nursing mothers in the HoR will not be allowed proxy vote

(HoR Procedure Committee - Report)

The HoR Procedure Committee could not reach agreement on a proposal to allow MPs who are nursing mothers a proxy



[Advocacy Update Subscription](#)

[Free Sitting Date Cards](#)

[Index of AU articles](#)

[Info on Politicians' Lobbying Preferences](#)

vote, because it may set *"a somewhat dangerous precedent"* if introduced *"even on a limited basis"*, Committee Chair Margaret May (Lib, Qld) told parliament.

"Given the level of dissent, the committee resolved to present a report detailing the arguments for and against the proposal", the report said.

"While women themselves are not necessarily calling for any special attention, it is important that the House appreciates women's dual roles in the early months of their children's lives and that some accommodating measures be implemented", Mrs May added.

She suggested that this could be in the form of a blanket allowance of three months maternity leave or the provision of adequate child care in the House.

The New Zealand HoR has a system of proxy voting which allows a Member who is absent for the chamber and who cannot vote in person to have his/her vote recorded. The proxy may be of an "open nature applying to all business for an indefinite period"

Some Members were concerned that the NZ system was too lenient.

[Link to full report:](#)

That's it for this issue. Please feel free to quote from CB in your own publications with appropriate acknowledgement.

Sincerely,

Monica Telesny
 Editor & Publisher
 Committee Bulletin
 email: mtelesny@client-solutions.com.au
 phone: +61 2 6282 2471
 web: <http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?t=okp5rbcab.0.oxznlvbab.cpbdrvbab.1&ts=S0261&p=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.client-solutions.com.au>

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to dkindon@client-solutions.com.au, by mtelesny@client-solutions.com.au
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Committee Bulletin | PO Box 158 | DEAKIN WEST | ACT | 2600 | Australia