

Knowledge is power

How can Australians influence the work and decisions of the House of Representatives?

As the old adage says 'knowledge is power'.

Greater awareness of how the House operates can help you in having your say. If you need to know more about the House in which Governments are formed and in which most proposed Commonwealth laws are introduced, then our seminars may interest you.

During 2000, the Department of the House of Representatives will be conducting nine seminars in Canberra which examine the legislative, committee and budget processes and procedures of

the House of Representatives. The seminars vary in the topics covered and in the amount of detail provided. There is something for everyone!

We also conduct seminars outside Canberra. If your organisation is interested in a seminar being arranged for you outside Canberra, please contact the Liaison and Projects Office at
 email: seminar.reps@aph.gov.au
 telephone: (02) 6277 2122
 or fax: (02) 6277 8521.

If you are interested in seeing details of our seminars, visit our web site at www.aph.gov.au/house/info/seminars or contact us on the above numbers for your free copy of our 2000 Seminar booklet.

Watch this space



House Economics Committee report on Reserve Bank

Twice a year the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, Mr Ian Macfarlane, appears before the House of Representatives Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration to discuss the Bank's semi-annual statement. The House Economics Committee provides an important, high profile, mechanism for accountability in the Bank's administration of monetary policy. The Committee's report on the Bank's semi-annual statement for November 1999 and the Bank's 1998/99 annual report will be tabled in Parliament in March 2000. Once tabled, the report will be made available through the Committee's web site at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/efpa or can be obtained by calling the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4587 or by emailing the secretariat at EFPA.Reps@aph.gov.au.

Regional Services Committee report on regional infrastructure and development

A major committee report on infrastructure and the development of Australia's regional areas is expected to be released on 13 March 2000. The report will present the findings and recommendations of the House of Representatives Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services. Copies of the report will be available after its presentation in the House from the Committee's web site at: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind or can be obtained by telephoning (02) 6277 4500.

Indigenous health inquiry nearing completion

The House of Representatives Committee on Family and Community Affairs will soon report on its inquiry into indigenous health. The report is expected to be released April/May 2000. Further information can be obtained from the committee secretariat by telephoning (02) 6277 4566.

Findings on three treaties to be released in March

On 6 March 2000, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Treaties will table a report that details the results of its review into three treaty actions:

- an agreement with Singapore on the use of the Shoalwater Bay (Defence) training area;
- a development cooperation treaty with Papua New Guinea; and
- the Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants.

The report will be available from the Treaties Committee web site at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct or by telephoning the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

Four reports expected from Public Accounts and Audit Committee

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit is due to release four new reports by May 2000. These reports are on the following matters:

- review of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* and the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*;
- review of two Auditor-General's reports covering issues across various Commonwealth Government Departments; and
- the Public Accounts and Audit Committee's annual activities.

Further information can be obtained from the committee secretariat on telephone (02) 6277 4615. Following their release, copies of the report will be available from the Committee's web site at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jpaa