



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE,  
WATER, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

Inquiry into the Australian coastal zone

**MEDIA RELEASE**

*Issued: 18 March 2009*

*Chair—Jennie George MP  
Deputy Chair—Mal Washer MP*

## **Federal department to discuss disaster recovery planning and climate change impacts**

The House of Representatives Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts Committee will hear from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs at a public hearing in Canberra on 19 March 2009 as part of its inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on Australia's coastal zone.

"The department is responsible for coordinating disaster recovery policy at a whole of government level. It also has a whole of government leadership role in the area of Indigenous affairs," Committee Chair Ms George said.

"Given the vulnerability of coastal areas to climate change impacts, the Committee is interested in discussing disaster recovery planning for the coast, as well as the particular issues facing coastal Indigenous communities."

"The department's submission notes that there are some 330 Indigenous communities across Australia located within 10 kilometres of the coast, with a number of these communities being located in low-lying coastal areas, particularly in the Torres Strait," Ms George said.

The inquiry is examining the environmental impacts of coastal population growth and ways to promote sustainable use of coastal resources, and the impact of climate change on coastal areas, including sea level rise. The Committee is also looking at ways to encourage sustainable coastal communities, and at governance and institutional arrangements for Australia's coastal zone.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the hearing, which will also be webcast (audio only) on the Parliament House website at: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting>.

**Public hearing schedule on 19 March 2009**  
**Venue: Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra**

**10.45am Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

Further details on the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ccwea>.

For **media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Jennie George MP, on 02 6277 4260 (Canberra) or 02 4262 6122 (electorate office)

For **background information**, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or by email at [ccwea.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:ccwea.reps@aph.gov.au).

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