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The rankings game

The 2014-15 *Times Higher Education* World University rankings shows Australian universities continue to improve in world rankings, but face increasing competition from Asian universities.

The Australian National University has moved up three places to rank 45 in the latest *Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2014-15*.

The results show the ANU was particularly strong in the teaching and research reputation criteria, and follow the recent QS Top Universities rankings which ranked ANU 25th in the world.

ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Young AO said the results were a reflection of the quality and commitment of the University's staff and students.

"The ANU takes pride in its international reputation for research and education, so it's pleasing to receive this recognition on the world stage," he said.

Diary Dates

October 9-10 The Lucky Country – 50 years on; 4th Floor Conference Room, National Library of Australia. Annual Conference of the Independent Scholars Association of Australia (ISAA), program, registration details go to www.isaa.org.au/conference/ or email: info@isaa.org.au.

October 14 – Graeme Simsion, *The Rosie Effect – The Sequel to the Rosie Project*, which was the 2013 Australian Book of the Year. Manning Clark 2

October 15 Wed 4pm Cedric Mims "The Next Pandemic"

October 22 – Hugh McKay, *The Art of Belonging*, Manning Clark 1

There are 4 free car parking spaces for ANUEF members visiting the Molony Room in the Balmain Lane Car Park immediately south of the Molony Room.

More diary dates on page 14

Professor Young said it was particularly encouraging to have the quality of ANU teaching and reputation for research highlighted by the rankings results.

“While rankings can be an imperfect science, it is satisfying to see the hard work of our staff and students recognised through the University’s global standing,” he said.

“With so many outstanding people working at the ANU, a day rarely goes by without a new discovery or advancement in thinking that helps make the world a better place,” he said.

In the past fortnight, three ANU staff – Dr Vinh Lu, Dr Imogen Mitchell, and Associate Professor Christine Phillips – were honoured for their outstanding contributions to teaching as part of the Australian Awards for University Teaching.

Historian Professor Joan Beaumont also won the 2014 NSW Premier’s Australian History Prize for her book on the First World War, *Broken Nation: Australians in the Great War*.

The *Times Higher Education* World University Rankings use 13 performance indicators to rank the world’s top 200 universities.

Commenting on the rankings, the Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, said “The need for reform has never been clearer. *The Times*’ rankings are a clarion call to the Senate to support the Government’s higher education changes or risk condemning our universities to a slow decline,”.

“Last year there were 20 Asian universities in the top 200. This year there are 24. Over the same period only one additional Australian university entered the top 200,” Mr Pyne said.

“The Government wants to ensure Australian universities can continue to produce the very best teaching and research while remaining competitive internationally.

“The Government is not alone, Universities Australia, the Australian Technology Network Universities, the Innovative Research Universities, the Regional Universities Network, and the Group of Eight universities all agree the Senate needs to support reform,” he said.

“Our reforms will be a win for Australian students and for the hundreds of thousands of Australians, many in regional areas, whose jobs depend upon the strength of Australia’s \$15 billion international education industry,” Mr Pyne said.

The full list will be available at www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/

Universities Australia

Inevitable decline in higher education without change: Submission

The quality, performance, competitiveness and reputation of Australia's higher education sector will be condemned to a path of inevitable decline if, in the absence

of increased public investment, the Government's higher education proposals are discarded in their entirety, according to peak university body, Universities Australia.

This is the centrepiece warning of Universities Australia's submission to the Senate inquiry into the Government's *Higher Education and Research Reform Amendment Bill 2014*, which was made public by the Senate Committee this afternoon.

"Against a backdrop of successive governments unable or unwilling to invest in universities and research at the level needed to keep the system strong in an increasingly intense and globally competitive environment, a new approach is required," said Belinda Robinson, Chief Executive of Universities Australia.

"With amendments to improve fairness and affordability for students, the Bill will allow universities to build more predictable and durable business models, less vulnerable to government funding instability and frequently changing policy and budget priorities," Ms Robinson said.

Australia is now in second last place amongst developed countries for the level of public investment in tertiary education (30th out of 31 OECD countries), and public investment per student has declined in real terms by 16.7 per cent between 1994 and 2012.

"Australia's university sector is approaching a crossroads. Our universities will increasingly struggle to meet the quality and performance expectations of students, and our national research capability will continue to erode, if funding remains inadequate," said Ms Robinson.

"An under-funded university system isn't serving students, it isn't serving families, and it certainly isn't serving our economy or Australia's ability to remain globally competitive. Australia can't afford to be left behind."

Ms Robinson said opposing the Bill was not a solution - it would simply defer indefinitely a problem that previous governments had failed to adequately address.

"We may not get another shot at this for some time. We are urging Senators to pass the Bill with amendments, including to:

- reduce the magnitude of the 20 per cent cut in the government contribution to relieve upward pressure on fee price;
- maintain the CPI interest rate on student loans; and
- provide for an adjustment package to assist with the transition to a market-based system.

"In amending and passing the Bill, Senators will create a legacy in having shaped and positioned Australia's higher education system for delivering long-term national productivity and prosperity".

Universities Australia's submission can be accessed [here](#).

German/Australian research partnership

Universities Australia has announced the formation of a major science and research exchange agreement between Australian universities and those in Germany - one of the most research-intensive industrial countries in the world..

Belinda Robinson, Chief Executive of Universities Australia says the signing of a letter of intent between the Germany Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Universities Australia in Canberra starts a process that will see the development of a Memorandum of Understanding cementing a new joint partnership program later in the year.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is the largest funding organisation in the world supporting the international exchange of students and scholars. Since its foundation in 1925 it has provided funding for more than 1.9 million scholars in Germany and abroad.

The purpose of the agreement is to encourage universities in Germany and Australia to provide matched funds for established and up-and-coming scientists and researchers to undertake research in their partner country.

Ms Robinson went on, "Today we are seeing the beginning of a new and exciting partnership that will see Australia further collaborate and work with a country that is considered a research and innovation powerhouse.

"By increasing our participation in research partnerships worldwide, Australia not only enhances our national capacity to increase research output, such as co-authored research publications, but we enable our researchers to collaborate on frontier research projects and translate the findings into localised solutions for Australians." .

Ms Robinson said that over the years, many German academics had indicated a desire to collaborate with Australian researchers through the DAAD but the lack of an overarching, sector-wide agreement had prevented them from doing so.

"We are now at a point where interest from both German and Australian universities is strong enough that developing a sector-wide formal program is the next logical step," she said.

The DAAD President Professor Margret Wintermantel said that "the agreement is a breakthrough for academic relations between Germany and Australia. It sets the stage for far-reaching collaboration with all the universities in the country."

Once agreed, the scheme will be open to all Universities Australia member universities with the first Australia-wide round opening in 2015 for 2016 projects.

ANU Gender Institute at gender equality inquiry

Dr Susan Harris-Rimmer of the Australian National University (ANU) Gender Institute appeared before a parliamentary inquiry recently to discuss human rights issues confronting women and girls in the Indian Ocean – Asia-Pacific region.

The Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade is conducting the inquiry.

Violence against women and girls, leadership and political participation, economic development and employment, social values and access to justice was on the agenda for discussion at the public hearing.

The Gender Institute, a cross-campus virtual institute at the ANU, aims to support and deepen research, education and outreach on gender and sexuality issues. Dr Harris-Rimmer has a long and esteemed career in the fields of gender studies,

human rights law and Asia-Pacific governments. She is also the Director of Studies at the ANU's Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy and is a national board member of the Refugee Council of Australia and a Research Associate at the Development Policy Centre in the ANU's Crawford School.

She has also been a board member of UN Women Australia and a member of the national committee and past president of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights.

Further information on the inquiry is available on the Committee's website at www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt.

Launch of the Bioresource Processing Research Institute of Australia

The Bioresource Processing Research Institute of Australia was launched at Monash University by the Minister for Industry, Ian McFarlane, on September 18

The Minister said the new institute “has certainly got enormous potential going forward and to build and leverage off the Australian Pulp and Paper Institute’s technical expertise to take it to other industries. It is all about transitioning the pulp and paper industry to a high value and novel products and possessing industry, which is critical to our future”.

He added, “The work that is going on here in terms of polymers and chemicals and the use of green chemistry and energy solutions for bioprocessing industries is critical to our future. It is appropriate that the Bioresource Processing Research Institute of Australia be housed here at Monash University, because of the synergies that Monash’s research strengths already have in the area of advanced materials, catalytic engineering, industry biotechnology and green chemistry”.

La Trobe University Asia Centre

In an address at the launch on September 17 of the La Trobe University Asia Centre, the Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Robb AO, said, “Australia’s five great strengths are, in our view, resources and energy; agriculture and agribusiness; health and medical research, tourism and hospitality and of course education, including international education”.

He went on, “ We have all seen the OECD figures which estimate the middle class of the Asia Pacific surging from 600 million to around three billion within 20-30 years. ...As a proud alumni of La Trobe, having studied economics here, I am well aware that this is a university that has set a gold standard in terms of expertise in Asia. ...More than two million people living in Australia speak an Asian language, including almost 700,000 who speak either Mandarin or Cantonese.

“Building Australia’s understanding of Asia and linkages with it is indeed a critical national task”.

Foreign languages for pre-schools

A trial has been launched in 40 pre-schools across the country of a play-based learning app on an iPad to encourage more children to learn languages over their schooling life

The reasoning, according to Federal Assistant Minister for Education Sussan Ley, “is because the numbers of students participating in learning a second language is going down and, yet, the need to speak in other languages, given our place in an increasingly global economy, is going up...”

“...we all know children who have a parent who speaks English and a parent who speaks another language and you visit them when they’re babies and they’re almost speaking fluently in both languages which just proves that the earlier you get to the human brain and start to introduce a second language the easier it is for that person. One in five Australians now speaks a language other than English at home so this is not just about our reaching out in terms of our students’ employment in the future but social interaction at home with children who actually have understandings of other languages when they come here or speak them at home as well.”

Speaking on ABC Canberra Breakfast with Philip Clark on September 19, Ms Ley said, “... we’re here in this bottom corner of the world but our students are training increasingly for this interconnected, global world and the ability to speak another language gives you a huge advantage in any job that you apply for, whether it be home or abroad, so it’s vital that we pick up our act compared to students elsewhere in the world and the best place to start doing that is in pre-school.

“This is about developing children’s ability to connect with the world later on and by the time these pre-schoolers grow up, who knows how much more they will require another language in terms of their jobs and their social life and their activities because they are travelling overseas and they’re travelling overseas far more than my generation ever did.

“The most important thing about this is it introduces children in a way that they can find fun, interesting and take it on. It’s an app on an iPad, it doesn’t matter whether you’re in remote outback Queensland or the inner cities of Sydney, Melbourne or in Canberra, you can still learn it and the information that we’ll get from this trial is vital towards developing the next stage so that we make sure that this gets embedded in as many pre-schools across the country as possible.

NT’s independent public schools get \$1.6m

The Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne and the Northern Territory Minister for Education, Peter Chandler, have announced that the Australian Government will invest \$1.61 million to help establish the Northern Territory’s first Independent Public Schools and increase local decision making in all government schools. All of the Northern Territory’s 154 government schools will be involved in the initiative, with up to 15 government schools expected to become Independent Public Schools by 2017.

To find out more, visit the [Students First website](#)

Cultural, educational and scientific links with Thailand

The Australia-Thailand Institute (ATI) has announced support for fifteen innovative education, health, science, art and cultural projects. The ATI grants program will support activities to strengthen creative economy links, increase science initiatives and promote Australia as a vibrant and diverse country.

The ATI funding of \$190,000 for 2014-15 will build links in a wide range of fields. Projects to develop networks between schools demonstrate a strong commitment to education and training. The ATI will support a civics education project which link educational institutions and electoral commissions in Australia and Thailand and build Thai capacity to develop civics curricula. Exchanges for science educators and workshops provide opportunities to share best practice and research methodologies.

Australian youth groups will travel to Thailand and present Australian dance and cultural heritage, while Thailand's traditional arts, contemporary cultures, cuisine, and film will feature at Australian festivals and workshops. Other highlights from the grants program include 'The Look,' a fashion collaboration project that will allow students to share designs and entrepreneurial skills.

Further information about the ATI is available at www.dfat.gov.au/ati.

Teaching literacy and numeracy – again

An accessible digital version of the *Early Childhood Literacy and Numeracy: Building Good Practice* resource is now available for download from the [Department of Education's website](#). The resource includes a digital booklet and a series of PDF flashcards. These are designed to help early childhood educators transform children's every day activities into opportunities for teaching literacy and numeracy concepts.

The booklet provides background information on literacy and numeracy concepts; mapping aides to use for teaching literacy and numeracy activities; and workshops designed to assist educators to discuss their programs with respect to literacy and numeracy development.

Visit the [Department of Education website](#) to download a copy of the resource or to see other early childhood education resources that are available.

The Lucky Country 50 years on

Donald Horne's now classic *The Lucky Country* first appeared in 1964. In it he stated:

"Australia is a lucky country run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck. It lives on other people's ideas, and, although its ordinary people are adaptable, most of its leaders (in all fields) so lack curiosity about the events that surround them that they are often taken by surprise".

In the 5th edition, 1998, he had more to say about leadership: “But combining a pragmatic style with a workable vision of the future now escapes our political leaders even more direly than it did at the end of the Age of Menzies – and this at a time when the luck has at last run out.”

Were Horne’s observations correct at the time he wrote them? Are they applicable today?

The annual conference of the Independent Scholars Association of Australia (ISAA), to be held on **October 9 and 10 [See below and Diary Dates on page 1 for details]**, at the National Library of Australia, will address these questions.

ISAA President Dr Christine Jennett explains: ‘We have gathered together a range of speakers who will investigate different aspects of Donald Horne’s comments’, pointing out that the keynote speaker will be his daughter, Associate Professor Julia Horne, University Historian at the University of Sydney, presenting *Reading Donald Horne*, to be followed by Dr David Headon discussing *Nation without a Mind*.

In the *Science and the Lucky Country* session Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe AM asks, “Can we re-invent the lucky country?”

Speakers will examine Australia 50 years on from various perspectives: Indigenous, multicultural, sociological, the arts, educational.

The annual lecture – *Menzies, the Beatles and the Oz Trial: What can 2014 learn from 1964?* – will be given by Dr Andrew Leigh, Member for Fraser, on Thursday, October 9, at 6pm, also at the National Library.

For full program and registration details go to www.isaa.org.au/conference/ or email info@isaa.org.au.

The heart attack app

Patients recovering from heart attacks are far more likely to complete life-saving rehabilitation if they have access to a new smartphone app developed by CSIRO, research reported in the journal *Heart* and in *Nature Reviews Cardiology*.

A clinical trial found that cardiac patients who undertook rehabilitation in their own homes via the smartphone app were almost 30 per cent more likely to take part in their rehab program than those who had to travel to an outpatient clinic or centre.

What's more, those who used CSIRO's smartphone home care delivery model - known as the Care Assessment Platform - were 40 per cent more likely to adhere to the program and almost 70 per cent more likely to see it through to completion.

The trial results, which showed that the Care Assessment Platform model was just as clinically effective as traditional rehab, were so successful that the next generation version of the platform will soon be offered in a number of Queensland

hospitals including Ipswich, Metro North and West Moreton Hospital and Health Services.

According to Dr Mohan Karunanithi from CSIRO's Digital Productivity Flagship, studies have clearly shown that patients who successfully complete cardiac rehabilitation following a heart attack have much better health outcomes. They are less likely to have another cardiac event, be readmitted to hospital or die from their condition.

"These programs traditionally take the form of group-based exercise and educational activities and are designed to help patients return to an active, satisfying life," Dr Karunanithi said.

Despite the benefits, uptake is generally poor due to factors such as time constraints, accessibility, lack of referral and patient motivation.

"The smartphone app offers another choice, overcoming one of the key barriers to patient participation and recovery. By integrating rehab with a patient's daily life, they are more likely to complete the program and make their new healthy lifestyle permanent," Dr Karunanithi said.

The app features health and exercise monitoring tools, delivers motivational materials through text messages and contains multimedia that educates patients about disease symptoms and management.

With cardiovascular disease killing one Australian nearly every 12 minutes, Rachelle Foreman, Health Director at the National Heart Foundation of Australia, is optimistic about the potential for this new technology.

"While more people are surviving their heart attacks, survivors need to understand they are not 'fixed' but are living with a chronic condition that needs to be actively managed," Ms Foreman said. "Evidence shows cardiac rehabilitation programs play a huge part in helping people to recover from their heart attack, make lifestyle changes and adhere to medications to reduce their risk of another heart attack.

"Unfortunately, more than half of patients are not referred to cardiac rehabilitation programs, so the system first needs to let patients know about the importance of such programs and then provide them with flexible options that suit their individual lifestyle and learning style.

"Programs such as the Care Assessment Platform are great innovations that can improve access and outcomes in a cost effective way and be expanded for those in rural areas, and high risk groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

The next step for the research team is to adapt the platform for rehabilitation for other chronic conditions such as pulmonary disease and diabetes.

The clinical trial was conducted by CSIRO and Queensland Health through the Australian eHealth research Centre. It took place at The Prince Charles, Redcliffe

and Caboolture hospitals and has been published in the journal *Heart* and reported in *Nature Reviews Cardiology*.

Do-it-yourself method attracts \$14.5m grant

CSIRO has received a \$14.5million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to improve the productivity and incomes of smallholder farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa. This five year humanitarian project will develop tools to generate self-reproducing hybrid cowpea and sorghum crops to help millions of farmers become more self sufficient with higher yielding crops.

CSIRO will use the grant to partner with other world leading research teams from Switzerland, USA, Germany and Mexico to achieve this goal.

"Sorghum and cowpea originated in Africa and are important staple food crops, but suffer from low yields," CSIRO Project Leader Dr Anna Koltunow said. "Our aim is to develop high-yielding sorghum and cowpea crops from which seeds can be saved and grown by smallholder farmers without loss of yield or quality.

"Hybrids in commercial farming systems can increase yield by 30 per cent or even more, because of a phenomenon known as heterosis or hybrid vigour. However, hybrid seed needs to be recreated and purchased each year and current technologies to produce hybrid seed are expensive."

The creation of self-reproducing hybrid cowpea and sorghum crops would allow smallholder farmers to self-harvest high-quality seed to provide a more secure food supply and potentially increase income through the sale of surplus harvest and seed.

"It's not going to be easy otherwise it would have been done already. The idea of changing the plants' reproductive process to an asexual one is a complex undertaking," Dr Koltunow said.

The initial stage of the project will be devoted to developing the techniques to enable cowpea and sorghum plants to reproduce asexually and is laboratory based. If this stage is successful, later phases will bring African breeders and institutes into the project.

Dr Anna Koltunow and her team are based at the CSIRO laboratories on the Waite Campus in Adelaide.

Parliament passes National Security legislation

The Parliament has passed the National Security Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) which contains a range of targeted measures to the legislative framework governing Australia's intelligence agencies, primarily the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979* (ASIO Act) and the *Intelligence Services Act 2001* (Intelligence Services Act).

According to the Attorney-General, Senator George Brandis, "These are the most important reforms of the ASIO Act since it was enacted in 1979 which implement the

bipartisan recommendations across two reports of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS).

“Through the reforms in the Bill, the Government is striking the right balance between ensuring that our intelligence agencies have the capabilities to counter emerging security threats, and protecting the rights and privacy of Australians. The additional improvements recommended by the PJCIS, in its review of the Bill, have strengthened a number of independent oversight and reporting mechanisms, particularly in relation to ASIO’s warrant-based intelligence collection activities, and the new scheme of special intelligence operations conducted by ASIO, which was modelled on the controlled operations scheme of the Australian Federal Police.

“The Government has also announced its commitment to increase the resources allocated to the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security to enable effective oversight of the reforms implemented by the Bill. The measures in the Bill will also be within the remit of the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor.

“The reforms implemented by this Bill will make a lasting and important contribution to the future capability of our intelligence agencies, and will ensure they are able to continue to protect Australia and Australians from those who would do us harm. This Bill is the first stage in the Government’s comprehensive examination and reform of Australia’s national security legislation. The Government thanks the Opposition for its ongoing bipartisanship on these matters.”

Chaplaincy arrangements with States

The Australian Government has welcomed the commitments from Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory to deliver the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP).

Following the June ruling by the High Court of Australia that payments made under the previous government’s National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program were invalid, the Commonwealth Government designed the new National School Chaplaincy Program so that funding is delivered via States and Territories, rather than directly to schools.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education, Senator Scott Ryan, said he is keen to finalise agreements with these governments but is concerned about students in remaining jurisdictions.

“Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory have seen the merit in the chaplaincy program and agreed to administer it to provide support for the pastoral care of teachers, students and school communities,” Senator Ryan said.

“I look forward to welcoming other States and Territories into the program in the near future.”

The ACT Government had declined to be part of the scheme but as the deadline for acceptance of the Commonwealth’s offer to the States and Territories approached, the ACT Government agreed to accept the Federal Government’s conditions..

“This program has the overwhelming support of students, parents and schools. It would be a significant disappointment if the NSCP was not available to all students across the country,” said Senator Ryan.

Have your say

Views wanted on overseas student market

A discussion paper ‘Reform of the ESOS framework’ has been released to seek views from interested stakeholders on opportunities to improve the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) and associated legislative arrangements.

The discussion paper outlines proposals to make ESOS “more contemporary, flexible and effective” and will address “a key Government objective—to reduce unnecessary red tape.”

Education institutions, training organisations, peak bodies and agencies are invited to make written submissions by **31 October 2014**.

[Download the discussion paper](#)

Public hearings held on ‘foreign fighters’ legislation

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security held two public hearings this past week for its inquiry into the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment (Foreign Fighters) Bill 2014.

The Committee heard from the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security then held a separate hearing with government agencies and leading organisations in public law, human rights and civil liberties. Organisations represented included the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law, and the Law Council of Australia.

The Bill is intended to enhance the capability of agencies to protect the Australian community from the threat of returning foreign fighters and individuals within Australia supporting terrorist organisations.

In referring the Bill to the Committee, the Attorney-General said that the Bill’s measures would:

- create new offences for ‘advocating terrorism’ and for entering or remaining in a ‘declared area’;
- broaden the criteria and streamline the process for the listing of terrorist organisations;
- extend instances in which a control order may be sought; extend the sunset provisions of the preventative detention order and control order regimes; and include a sunset clause for the ‘declared area’ offence;
- provide certain law enforcement agencies with additional tools needed to investigate, arrest and prosecute those supporting foreign conflicts;
- limit the means of travel for foreign fighting or support for foreign fighters; and

- strengthen protections at Australia's borders.

The Committee is conducting an intensive inquiry and will report by 17 October 2014.

Members of the public were invited to make submissions to the inquiry by October 3. Further information about the inquiry, including full programs for the hearings, can be accessed via the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/pjicis>. The Bill and Explanatory Memorandum can be accessed via http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation.

For inquiry information, please contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 2360 or email pjicis@aph.gov.au.

Cyber security, international mail screening and EPBC Act reports

Parliament's Joint Public Accounts Committee is conducting a new inquiry that will examine cyber security, international mail screening, and management of compliance with Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 conditions of approval. It will also review administration of the Australian Business Register and the Multi-role Helicopter Program. The inquiry is part of the committee's role of examining Australian National Audit Office reports.

Committee Chair Dr Andrew Southcott MP said that the inquiry reflects the Committee's important role of holding Commonwealth agencies to account for the efficiency and effectiveness with which they use public monies.

Interested persons and organisations are invited to make submissions to the Committee's inquiry, addressing the terms of reference, by 14 October 2014. Further information about the Committee's inquiry, including details on how to lodge a submission, are available on the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa.

Public hearings have been scheduled for 23 October, 24 October and 30 October.

The Committee has selected five ANAO reports for detailed inquiry:

- Audit Report No. 42 (2013-14) Screening of International Mail
- Audit Report No. 43 (2013-14) Managing Compliance with Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 Conditions of Approval
- Audit Report No. 48 (2013-14) Administration of the Australian Business Register
- Audit Report No. 50 (2013-14) Cyber Attacks: Securing Agencies' ICT Systems
- Audit Report No. 52 (2013-14) Multi-Role Helicopter Program

For information about the inquiry and public hearing: please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4615, email jcpaa@aph.gov.au, or visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa>.

Inquiry into Defence's anti-bomb facilities

The Public Works Committee is conducting an inquiry into Defence's Counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Capability Facilities and Infrastructure Project.

The Department of Defence will deliver the project at Nurrungar in South Australia and at multiple Defence bases around Australia. The collective proposed works will support the

testing, training and storage of counter IED equipment.

The purpose of the proposed project is to deliver new and refurbished, purpose-built facilities and associated infrastructure to support the introduction of a sustainable counter IED capability into the Australian Defence Force.

The proposed works are due to be completed by late 2015 at an estimated cost of \$24.6 million.

The Committee's Chair, Karen Andrews MP, said the Committee will conduct public and in-camera hearings for the inquiry in Woomera in November 2014.

Full details on the project are available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/pwc

Submissions to the inquiry close on Friday, **24 October 2014**.

Full details of the public hearing will be announced later in October.

For further information, including how to make a submission, the public hearing times, and copies of submissions when they become available, please visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/pwc> or contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4636.

US think tank sees leading role for Australia

To support the growing energy needs of the Indo-Pacific region, a leading United States policy think tank has discussed Australia becoming the donor of choice in supporting the management of oil, gas and mining projects and the resulting revenues.

The hearing is part of the Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's inquiry into the role of the private sector in promoting economic development and reducing poverty in the region.

The Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a leading international policy institution based in the US that focuses on defence and security; regional stability; and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global development and economic integration. In 2013, the CSIS Executive Council on Development published the report *Our Shared Opportunity: A Vision for Global Prosperity*, calling for a greater reliance on business, trade, and investment tools to achieve better development outcomes.

At a public hearing in Canberra on 2 October. Mr Dan Runde, Director of the CSIS Project on Prosperity and Development, gave evidence urging Australian policy makers to focus on broad based economic growth, private sector partnerships and integrating new development tools.

The CSIS submission to the inquiry highlighted that since Australia provided development assistance of nearly \$15 billion from 2010-12 on top of more than \$36 billion in private financing to the developing world over the same period, it should be at the forefront of encouraging private enterprise-led growth, increasing trade and investment and strengthening its partnerships with developing countries.

According to CSIS, for Australia to help support the energy needs of the

developing world, it should establish a development finance capability similar to the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation and USAID's Development Credit Authority. To do this, CSIS suggest that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade utilise skill sets in Treasury and the Australian banking system.

Further details about the inquiry, including the terms of reference, copies of submissions, and how to contribute can be obtained from the committee's website at www.apf.gov.au/jfadt or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@apf.gov.au.

Export Council discusses multi-billion dollar trade with Middle East

The Director of the Export Council of Australia, Stephen Deady, appeared before the Trade sub-committee for its inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationships with the Middle East, outlining. Australia growing its \$14 billion in trade and investment opportunities with the Middle East

The Export Council submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade says it would welcome a resumption of the free trade negotiations with the Gulf States that stalled in 2009. The Council believes a Free Trade Agreement would help liberalise trade between Australia and Gulf Cooperation Council countries such as United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain, which have a combined population of 44 million and a collective GDP of US\$1.55 trillion.

A lack of understanding of Middle Eastern culture and business practices may have contributed to some Australian export businesses placing the region in the "too hard basket", according to the Export Council. It wants the government to develop mechanisms to help resolve disputes and legal issues by using international legal standards instead of the domestic laws of Australia and Middle Eastern nations.

It believes also that government could develop suitable guides to educate Australia business people on negotiations skills, pitching strategies and export procedures that work in the Middle East. Australian exporters and business organisations could also benefit from government grant funding to help them access more trade opportunities.

The Export Council is also seeking more Australian ministers and diplomats to provide physical support on trade missions to the Middle East to help better promote Australian companies competing for contracts and tenders against well-backed companies from the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the United States that are long established in the region.

For background information: Further details about the inquiry, including the full terms of reference and how to contribute, can be obtained from the committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jfadt or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@aph.gov.au.

Extension to the reporting deadline for foreign investment inquiry

The Treasurer has granted the House of Representatives Economics Committee an extension to the reporting deadline for its inquiry into foreign investment in residential real estate. The committee will now report by no later than 28 November 2014.. The Committee was originally required to report by 10 October 2014.

The Chair of the Committee, Ms Kelly O'Dwyer MP, said that the committee had written to the Treasurer requesting this extension due to a number of outstanding issues central to its deliberations in preparing a final report. These include pending answers to questions from a number of witnesses, consultations with the States and Territories regarding their transfer of property registers and legal advice on Australia's international obligations.

For background information: Please contact the committee secretariat:
Phone: (02) 6277 4587 Email: economics.reps@aph.gov.au
Website: www.aph.gov.au/economics

What's On at the ANU?

What's On at ANU is a fortnightly email for staff and students that aims to highlight many of the interesting, enlightening and engaging public lectures, seminars and events happening around the university. All of these events are open to the public. Please check if reservations are needed.

For more information on any of the events listed, or to see a calendar of upcoming events, go to <http://billboard.anu.edu.au/events.asp>

Additional Diary Dates

“Meet the authors – a series” – organised by Colin Steele

For more details email colin.steele@anu.edu.au

14 October – Graeme Simsion, *The Rosie Effect – The Sequel to the Rosie Project*, which was the 2013 Australian Book of the Year. Manning Clark 2

22 October – Hugh McKay, *The Art of Belonging*, Manning Clark 1

ANU Archives supporters can find updated news on the ANU website at <http://www.archives.anu.edu.au/news-and-events-1>

ANUEF Room Bookings

Requests for booking the Molony Room should be addressed to Judith Caton via email, and these will be forwarded to the committee for approval, and then entered into the diary. A return email will be sent to the organisation confirming the booking. The diary is held in the office. Conditions for the use of the premises will be emailed to users and a copy is on the ANUEF website. Contact Judith Caton on judith.caton@anu.edu.au

The next edition of *Emeritus*, the ANUEF Newsletter, will be published in November, 2014.