



Parliament of Australia

Report of the Parliamentary Delegation
to
United Kingdom and Germany

26 October to 5 November 2015

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ISBN 978-1-74366-478-0 Printed version

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Members of the Delegation

Hon Teresa Gambaro MP
Leader of the Delegation

Senator the Hon Kim Carr
Deputy Leader of the Delegation

Senator Fawcett

Mr Mark Coulton MP

Ms Susan Cardell
Delegation Secretary

Introduction

The aim of the parliamentary delegation visit to the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany between 25 October and 5 November 2015 was to strengthen bilateral relations between Australian and UK and German parliamentarians and gain a better understanding of the issues faced by both countries. A supporting and interlocking set of objectives was to:

- Gain greater insight into the current domestic, political, social and economic issues faced by the UK and Germany including:
 - Regional infrastructure and development, including agriculture and rail freight/intermodals
 - Financial services, including social impact bonds and FinTech start ups
 - Citizenship issues and cultural challenges, including forced marriages and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Gain greater appreciation of the UK's and Germany's views on issues of mutual concern including:
 - Defence governance and procurement, in particular naval infrastructure
 - Foreign engagement and aid, including private-business partnerships
 - Environment and renewable energy
- To understand further the relationship between the Westminster and the devolved legislature of Scotland, including:
 - History of devolution and constitutional reform in Scotland
 - The independence debate
 - 2015 Election outcome

The delegation felt very welcome in each country it visited, and was warmly received by parliamentarians and government officials, business representatives and local communities. It was clear that Australia is held in high regard in both the UK and Germany, and the delegation relished the opportunity to build on the strong bilateral relationships.

This report outlines the places visited, matters discussed and aspects of the bilateral relationship with each country visited. The official program of activities in each country is included as an appendix to this report.

Acknowledgements

The delegation wishes to record its appreciation of the work that went into preparing for the visit, including the arrangements made by the Australian Parliament's International and Parliamentary Relations Office, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) UK Branch, officials from the Scottish Parliament, and the Administration of the German Bundestag. The delegation would also like to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australia's diplomatic missions in the United Kingdom and Germany for their work in developing the programs and the excellent support and hospitality provided during the visits.

United Kingdom

The delegation visited the UK on 26-31 October 2015.

The delegation met with colleagues in the UK Westminster Parliament in London to exchange views on issues of common interest to the UK and Australia on 26-28 October.

The delegation met with the Speaker of the House of Commons, Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, and discussed parliamentary matters such as Question Time, the appointment of Speaker, and his role as Chair of the House of Commons Commission which is responsible for the administration and services of the House of Commons, including the maintenance of the Palace of Westminster and the Parliamentary Estate.

The delegation held fruitful discussions with many UK parliamentarians

including those from All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG), such as the Australia and New Zealand APPG, the APPG for International Freedom of Religion or Belief, the 'Honour' Based Abuse APPG, Financial Markets and Services APPG, and City Regions APPG. The delegation discussed mutual areas of interest, including defence procurement, security, renewable energy, and foreign affairs with members of parliamentary committees.

The delegation was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Mr Akbar Khan, the 7th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Mr Khan was recommended to the 61st General Assembly by the Association's International Executive Committee, which is made up of representatives of the nine regions of the CPA – Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean,



Meeting with Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger, Chair of the CPA UK Executive Committee

Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific; and South-East Asia. The new Secretary-General started his appointment on 1 January 2016 for a fixed term of four years.

Mr Khan and representatives of the CPA UK Branch, including the Chair, Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger MP encouraged Australia to rejoin the CPA and spoke of the benefits of the work of the CPA which aims to connect, develop, promote and support Parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and the implementation of the enduring values of the Commonwealth.

The delegation notes the value of the CPA, the renewal in its leadership, and the enthusiasm of the UK for Australia to contribute to good governance again. The delegation supports the Australian Federal Parliament rejoining the CPA.

On 29 October 2015, the delegation participated in a program run by the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. The delegation met with the Presiding Officer, Rt Hon. Tricia Marwick MSP and discussed her role in the parliament, the number of women in parliament, and security measures and maintenance of the parliamentary building. The delegation met with a cross-party representation of Members of the Scottish Parliament and discussed issues such as the work of parliamentary committees, parliamentary business, and devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament.

The program continued in Scotland on 30-31 October and included discussions in Glasgow and visits to the Whitelee

Windfarm, BAE Systems, and Thales Optronics.

The bilateral relationship

Australia has a significant relationship with the UK underpinned by our shared heritage, common values, closely aligned strategic outlook and interests, and trade and investment links. We share a record of active service and cooperation in conflict zones around the world and are in regular dialogue at the highest levels across government on global issues, including international security, multilateral cooperation and economic issues on the G20 agenda.

About five percent of Australia's resident population was born in the UK, making people of British heritage our largest migrant community. Tourism flows are also significant, with 652,000 people visiting Australia from the UK in 2014. More than one million Australians visit the UK each year.

Australia has many bilateral agreements with the UK including in the areas of taxation, health services, criminal investigations and migration. Australia's development partnership with the UK is close, with approximately \$1.8 billion in joint projects. Current priorities for collaboration include: economic growth and development, including aid for trade and leveraging the private sector; gender equality and women's empowerment; humanitarian and conflict approaches; and global development agendas.

UK is the second largest source of total and direct foreign investment in Australia. In 2014 the total UK foreign investment in Australia was valued at \$484.16 billion. Australian investment in the UK was \$304.54 billion.

The UK is Australia's seventh largest two-way trading partner, with \$20.8 billion in goods and services in 2014. Gold exports (\$878 million) accounted for about 23 percent of Australia's total merchandise exports to the UK in 2014. Other significant exports included alcoholic beverages (\$383 million), lead (\$301 million) and manufactured articles (\$272 million). Significant imports from the UK included passenger motor vehicles (\$1.01 billion), medicaments (\$639 million), and printed matter (\$274 million).

Environment and renewables

The delegation met with members of the Commons Energy and Climate

Change Committee who gave an insight into its current inquiries into investor confidence in renewables and low carbon network infrastructure. In Scotland, representatives of the Scottish Government Energy & Climate Change Directorate gave a comprehensive overview of Scottish Government Energy Policy and targets, including the target to generate the equivalent of 100 percent of Scotland's electricity demand from renewable sources by 2020. The delegation enquired about base load power generation in relation to increased renewable generation. Representatives of the Directorate highlighted the upcoming closure of Scotland's last coal-fired power station and the plans



Visit to Whitelee Windfarm

to strengthen the national grid infrastructure in order to re-distribute energy within the rest of the UK. Scotland's renewable-heavy energy generation could then be balanced with coal and nuclear base load power from the rest of the UK to ensure a secure energy mix.

The delegation made a site visit to Whitelee Windfarm which is the UK's largest onshore windfarm located close to Glasgow. Whitelee has 215 turbines and can generate up to 539 megawatts of power, enough to power just under 300,000 homes. Whitelee has over 130kms of tracks and welcomes walkers, cyclists, horse riders and dog walkers to the site. Whitelee receives about 500,000 visitors to the Visitors Centre each year. A Habitat Management Plan was introduced as a way of improving the environmental conditions of the moorland which covers 2,547 hectares.

The delegation was shown the Whitelee Wind Farm Control Centre which monitors over 30 sites across the UK. Sophisticated technology allows Operational Controllers to monitor the status and performance of individual turbines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Weather monitoring systems allow Operational Controllers to quickly assess which weather elements are affecting, or are likely to affect, individual wind farms and they can make informed decisions about maintenance and operations schedules.

Devolution

Parliamentary reforms in the UK, referred to as 'devolution', have created a number of national assemblies, including a national Parliament of Scotland, a national

Assembly in Wales and a national Assembly in Northern Ireland. Varying levels of power have transferred from the UK Parliament to the national assemblies, but preserved authority over the devolved institutions remains in the UK Parliament.

The delegation was pleased to discuss the devolved Scottish Parliament with parliamentarians in the UK Parliament and the Scottish Parliament. On 18 September 2014, Scotland voted in a referendum on independence from the UK. The outcome of the referendum was a vote of 55 percent for 'no' to independence and 45 percent 'yes'. All of the major parties subsequently agreed to devolve further powers to Scotland.

The *Scotland Act 2012* gives the Scottish Parliament enhanced powers, which will come fully into effect in 2016. The Scottish Parliament has power to make laws on a range of issues, known as devolved matters, including agriculture, civil and criminal justice, education, environment, health, housing, local government, planning, police and fire services, social work, sport and the arts, and transport. Some issues concerning Scotland that have a UK or international impact remain the responsibility of the UK Parliament and include foreign affairs, defence, immigration and social security.

The delegation had discussions at Westminster with Kirsty Blackman MP regarding the history and policies of the Scottish National Party (SNP). The SNP supports and campaigns for Scottish independence. Ms Blackman discussed her views on the 2014 referendum, devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament and her work in the UK

Parliament. Ms Blackman clarified the position of SNP MPs in Westminster who do not vote on what they consider to be English only legislation and do not take seats in the upper chamber. Ms Blackman discussed youth engagement in politics and giving 16 and 17 year olds the right to vote in the referendum.

The delegation was told of the Barnett formula, which is a mechanism used by the Treasury in the UK to dictate the level of public spending in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and is based on the population of each nation and which powers are devolved to them. The formula is not enshrined by statute and the Treasury has extensive discretion about the formula's operation. Following the Scottish independence referendum in 2014, a UK cross-party Commission was established to formulate proposals for further devolution to Scotland. These proposals were set out in the Scotland Bill which introduced into the UK Parliament in May 2015 and was expected to go through the passage of Parliament by May 2016.

The current Scottish Parliament is an SNP majority government, with 69 of the total 129 MSPs.

The European Union

The UK is one of 28 member states of the European Union (EU) and is subject to EU legislation. In December 2014, the UK concluded a stock take of power-sharing arrangements between the UK and the EU, known as the Balance of Competences Review, which was intended to assess whether the extent of the EU's powers served the UK's national interest.

A significant issue in the UK is 'Brexit' which refers to the possibility of Great Britain leaving the European Union. Prime Minister Cameron has committed to hold a referendum, by the end of 2017, on whether the UK should remain in the EU. A bill providing for the referendum has been passed by the British Parliament.

Those in favor of Brexit argue that outside the EU, the UK would be better able to control immigration, conduct its own trade negotiations, and be freed from what they believe to be unnecessary EU regulations and bureaucracy. Those in favor of remaining in the EU argue that leaving the EU would risk the UK's prosperity, diminish its influence over world affairs, and result in trade barriers between the UK and the EU. The Commons Foreign Affairs Committee work included an inquiry into the costs and benefits of EU membership for the UK's role in the world. The Scottish Parliament supports remaining in the EU.

Defence

The defence relationship with the UK is well-established and extends across the breadth of areas including science and technology, capability development, cyber and space, and service-to-service engagement.

During its visit, the delegation had the opportunity to discuss current parliamentary committee inquiries; the UK's Strategic Defence and Security Review; possible military interventions against ISIL and Daesh; the situation in Syria; defence procurement; and defence capability, budget, and workforce requirements.

The delegation was pleased to meet with Lord Levene of Portsoken KBE, Chair of the 2011 report *Defence Reform: An independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence*. The report made 53 recommendations, and Lord Levene committed to reviewing progress annually.

Lord Levene outlined his involvement with procurement in the Ministry of Defence from the 1980s onwards. He highlighted the ongoing conflict between centralisation and the delegation of services as a key part of the challenges for the UK Ministry of Defence.

The delegation notes in Lord Levene's latest review in November 2015 he acknowledged that the great majority of the reform program set out in the original 2011 report had been implemented. He set out five more recommendations aimed at changing

behaviours in the Ministry of Defence to deliver sustained reform.

The delegation made site visits to BAE Naval Ships and Thales Optronics in Glasgow. At BAE the delegation was interested to discuss the UK's continuous ship building program. BAE is the sole ship-builder in the UK and uses every shipyard in the UK to build ships through the supply chain. Representatives of BAE provided a presentation on the Offshore Patrol Vessels and the Type 26 Global Combat Ships under development.

At Thales Optronics the delegation toured the factory floor, discussed optronics in major equipment, such as periscopes for the Collins Class submarines, and inspected a Thales Hawkei vehicle, one of the vehicles being acquired by the Australian Defence Force under the Project LAND 121.



Visit to BAE Systems, Glasgow

Foreign Engagement and Aid

The delegation met with the UK Foreign Affairs Committee and discussed its current inquiries into the UK's role in the fight against ISIL, an examination of intervention in Libya, and the costs and benefits of UK membership of the European Union.

The delegation met with Mita Samani, Head of Business Engagement, Department for International Development (DfID). Ms Samani highlighted DfID's increased engagement with the private sector since 2010 and commented that using private sector investment helps to ensure maintenance of DfID funded projects, which drives growth, creates jobs and helps fund finance services and investment. Ms Samani also commented on the relationship with non-government organisations as being critical because of their understanding of areas, people and culture.

Regional infrastructure

The delegation discussed UK regional infrastructure and development with Lord Berkeley OBE and Mr Geoffrey Spence, Chief Executive of Infrastructure UK, a unit within the Treasury working on the UK's long-term infrastructure priorities. Lord Berkeley gave an overview of the current rail passenger transport and rail freight situation in the UK. He commented on an increase in passenger journeys nationwide as a cause of congestion. Lord Berkeley highlighted that Australian regulations meant freight could only travel at night, whereas in Britain an independent infrastructure manager timetabled freight during the day, in a system that has proven effective.

Mr Spence highlighted one of the greatest challenges for UK infrastructure is an expected increase in demand linked to a rapidly growing population.

Banking and finance

Mr Stephen Hammond MP, Chair of the Financial Markets and Services All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) discussed with the delegation the regulation of financial services in the UK.

Mr Hammond underlined that before the change in the UK regulatory framework in 2012, there had been a tendency to operate a single regulatory system across various sectors such as banks and asset management.

Mr Hammond commented that London was keen to become a centre of Islamic finance, particularly in banking. He underlined that the challenge lay in devising products that were compatible with both UK regulation and Sharia Law.

Cultural challenges

The delegation was interested to talk with UK parliamentarians about responding to certain cultural challenges, such as forced marriages and FGM.

Baroness Berridge, Chair, Freedom of Religion and Belief APPG told the delegation about the cross-party group of parliamentarians who believe that International Freedom of Religion or Belief is a crucial human right as stated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The group seeks to raise awareness among parliamentarians, media, government and the general public of the international freedom of religion or belief as a human right.

Germany

The delegation visited Germany from 2 to 5 November on the second leg of its visit. The program of activities was based in the capital city, Berlin and the city of Cologne.

In Berlin the delegation met with Professor Norbert Lammert MdB, President of the German Bundestag and discussed the operations of the Bundestag, including question time, the work of parliamentary committees, and voting in the plenary chamber.

The delegation was pleased to meet with the Parliamentary State Secretary of the Federal Ministry for Economics and Energy, Mr Uwe Beckmeyer MdB to discuss mutual areas of interest, including energy prices, free trade agreements, defence, agriculture, data security, and promoting industry and innovation.

The delegation also had productive discussions with Bundestag parliamentarians, including from the Committee on Food and Agriculture, the Defence Committee, Committee on Internal Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Economic Affairs and Energy.

In Cologne the delegation was pleased to meet the Deputy Mayor of the City of Cologne, Ms Elfi Scho-Antwerpes MdB, who is also a member of the Bundestag. Ms Scho-Antwerpes discussed the asylum seeker situation in Cologne and accompanied the delegation on visits to two temporary accommodation facilities for refugees.

The program included site visits to the Institute of Solar Research, German Aerospace Center in Cologne and to the

energy self-sufficient village of Feldheim, located approximately 70 kilometres south-west of Berlin.

The bilateral relationship

Australia and Germany have a warm and vibrant bilateral relationship. Both countries are committed to deepening economic linkages and promoting international trade liberalisation. They work closely together in multilateral fora such as the UN and G20 to address non-proliferation and disarmament issues, climate change, counter-terrorism and poverty alleviation. Indeed, many people with whom the delegation met noted the importance of the Australia-Germany relationship.

People-to-people links between Australia and Germany are well established. According to ABS data from the 2011 census, just over 108,000 Australian residents were born in Germany, while almost 900,000 Australians claim German ancestry. In 2014-15, 26,327 working holidaymaker visas were issued to young Germans, Australia's third-largest source worldwide, and second-largest source in Europe. Germany was the second-largest European market for tourists visiting Australia (over 188,100) in 2014-15.

Germany is Australia's sixth-largest source of imports, selling goods and services to Australia worth \$14.0 billion in 2014-15. Australia's total goods and services exports to Germany were worth \$2.8 billion in 2014-15. Major goods imports from Germany are cars, medication, measuring and analysing equipment and pumps (excluding liquid pumps) and parts. Major Australian goods exports to Germany are gold coins, precious metal ores and

concentrates, coal and pharmaceutical products.

Germany is the fifth-largest destination for Australian investment abroad. The level of Australian investment in Germany at the end of 2014 was worth \$65 billion. Germany's investment in Australia in 2014 was valued at \$40 billion.

Australia and Germany share strong ties in innovation and research. More than 500 partnerships and cooperation agreements exist between Australian and German universities. Germany is a key partner for Australia's peak scientific body, the CSIRO, and Australia's third most important research partner overall. Areas of collaboration with German organisations include: ICT, food safety

technology and food processing, solar technology, materials science and engineering, crop science, science education programs and radio astronomy and aerospace research.

The bilateral relationship with Germany is strengthened through the Australia-Germany Advisory Group (AGAG), which was established in November 2014 and is co-chaired by Australian Minister for Finance, Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, and the German Minister of State, Dr Maria Böhmer. The AGAG includes leaders from the Australian and German scientific, cultural and business communities.

The AGAG's Report, *Collaboration, Innovation and Opportunity*, outlined opportunities for enhancing engagement between the two



Meeting with Mr Volkmar Klein MdB, Chair of the Germany-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group

countries. The Report put forth 59 recommendations across five key themes, including:

- Increased trade and investment;
- Improved strategic dialogue and collaboration;
- Strengthened cooperation on science and education;
- Exchange on diversity, migration, integration and refugees; and
- Enhanced cultural and sporting links and cooperation on wine making.¹

The Report was presented to Prime Minister Turnbull and Chancellor Merkel in Berlin on 13 November 2015 in Berlin. A key recommendation of the report was to update the bilateral Double Taxation Treaty. This was signed in Berlin in November 2015.

The visit to Germany provided the delegation with an opportunity to build on linkages established through the AGAG. Mr Volkmar Kleinn MdB, Chair of the Germany-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group was a most generous host during the delegation's visit.

Economic and foreign affairs

While in Germany, the delegation gained a greater insight into its economic and foreign policies. Germany is the world's fourth-largest economy with a GDP of US\$3.9 trillion in 2014. It is also the globe's third-largest exporter, with goods and services exports in 2014 worth US\$1.8 trillion, equating to nearly half of Germany's total GDP.

¹ A full list of recommendations can be found at <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/international-relations/Pages/australia-germany-advisory-group.aspx>

As the EU's largest economy, Germany exerts significant influence over the group's common foreign and economic policies, including measures to help Europe recover from a multi-year debt crisis.

Germany is committed to the EU and is the largest contributor to the EU budget. It has lead responses to common challenges such as energy security, climate change, nuclear non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. A number of Bundestag parliamentarians spoke with the delegation about the possibilities of broadening EU negotiations to Australia and the Pacific region, including in areas of trade, and student and scientific exchange.

Germany is a major contributor to humanitarian assistance projects across the world, with an official development assistance budget of €6.5 billion in the 2015 fiscal year.

Key issues discussed with the Committee on Foreign Affairs were security, the number of asylum seekers, relationships with Turkey and Russia, the situation in Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, and the Middle East, and the impact on regional and global stability of the rise of new centres of power like China.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs is one of four committees established by the German Constitution. The other three committees established by the Basic Law are the Defence Committee, Committee on the Affairs of the European Union, and the Petitions Committee.

Migration

A major issue across the EU is the migration crisis. At the time the delegation visited in November 2015, Germany was receiving about 1200 people seeking asylum per week. The Federal Ministry of the Interior reported that a total of 1.1 million people were registered as asylum-seekers in Germany in 2015, nearly five times the number registered in 2014.

In Cologne, the delegation visited two sites of temporary accommodation for refugees:

- a former hardware store, managed by the Red Cross, with about 100 residents, mainly families
- self-contained apartments, managed by Caritas, with about 80 residents, including 30 families

Deputy Mayor of Cologne

Ms Elfi Scho-Antwerpes MdB, told the delegation there were about 9000 refugees living in Cologne and there were, at that time, 300 people being registered in Cologne per week.

Representatives from the Red Cross told the delegation that refugees from Syria make up almost 40 percent of arrivals, while other migration arrivals were from Iraq, Afghanistan, and from the Balkan states such as Serbia, Albania and Kosovo.

Ms Scho-Antwerpes spoke of concerns and challenges in finding the housing and infrastructure to support the numbers of asylum seekers entering Cologne. However, there were many generous people in Cologne who worked, volunteered or donated to support the refugees.

Ms Barbara Woltmann MdB, Member of the Committee on Internal Affairs

spoke about the right under the German Constitution to guarantee asylum in Germany to all people who face political persecution. However, there were challenges with processing applications for the number of asylum seekers entering Germany. The German Parliament was considering a package of measures to reduce incentives and fast-track the processing of economic refugees. Ms Woltmann also discussed the high number of unregistered people entering Germany and the challenges associated with integration of asylum seekers in the community.

Environment and renewable energy

The delegation met with representatives of the Cologne Institute for Economic Research, a private institution which contributes to public and political debate through research, consultancy and communication services. Germany's environment and energy policies were discussed, including:

- Germany's policy of moving to clean energy from fossil fuels, and shutting down nuclear power by 2022
- the German government's subsidies to renewable energy producers is 20 billion euros per year
- household power bills in Germany include charges for using the power grids, levies for other services, a renewable energy surcharge which pays the state-guaranteed price for renewable energy to producers, and other taxes
- in 2014, Germany's electricity mix had a 27 percent renewable share
- Germans pay among the highest per-unit rates for power in Europe, however their support for the shift to a low-carbon economy is strong.



Visit to the Institute for Solar Research in Cologne.

Members of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Energy also discussed the energy transition to renewables and consumer attitudes to the price of energy in Germany.

The delegation visited the Institute for Solar Research, German Aerospace Center in Cologne, the largest research entity in Germany investigating solar technologies to provide heat, electricity and fuel. Prof. Dr Robert Pitz-Paal and Prof. Dr Bernhard Hoffschmidt provided a briefing on the optimisation of concentrating solar power systems for generating electricity, producing fuel and achieving Germany's CO₂ reduction targets.

The delegation visited the energy self-sufficient village Feldheim, which is located approximately 70km from Berlin. In 1995, a local entrepreneur paid for Feldheim's first wind turbine. Farmers began renting their land to energy companies wanting to install a wind turbine and a local renewable

energy company, Energiequelle, decided to install a wind farm in Feldheim. Now 47 wind turbines dot the Feldheim landscape.

In 2008 Energiequelle bought a 111 acre former Soviet military site about five miles from Feldheim, cleaned up the military waste, and constructed a 284 panel solar farm that produces over 2,700 MWh per year. Feldheim and Energiequelle also built a biogas plant that converts pig manure and unused corn into heat and a woodchip furnace which assists with heating during peak periods. Feldheim has its own energy grid which was built with contributions from its residents and Energiequelle and financing from the European Union and government subsidies.

Feldheim attracts thousands of tourists and school groups every year to its New Energy Forum, a renewable energy information and training centre.

Defence

Germany contributes actively to international peace and prosperity. It has played a key role in addressing ongoing conflict in Ukraine and Islamic State terrorism in Iraq and Syria.

The delegation discussed defence procurement processes with the Chairman of the Defence Committee, Mr Wolfgang Hellmich MdB. The Minister of Defence is obliged to submit to the Defence Committee all procurement projects of special importance in security or military policy terms, as well as those procurement projects requiring an outlay of €25 million and upwards, for the Committee to deliberate on them. In parliamentary practice, such procurement projects have so far not been implemented without the consent of the Defence Committee.

Mr Hellmich discussed the commitment of Germany to deploy troops in Afghanistan and the delegation notes the German Bundestag voted to approve the motion of the German government to extend the mandate to deploy German troops in Afghanistan until the end of 2016. The NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)-led operation is advising, supporting and training Afghan security forces.

The Defence Committee's work includes examining the process of restructuring and transforming the armed services, including recruitment and systems in place for the retiring military with post-traumatic stress.

Conclusion

Members of the delegation were very pleased to participate in the Australian Parliamentary visit to the UK and Germany in 2015, and to have the opportunity to contribute to the valuable relationships that Australia has with both countries.

The delegation held frank and fruitful discussions in each country, and concluded the visits with a greater understanding of the challenges being faced by those countries, and of the nature of Australia's relationships with them and ways in which those relationships could be enhanced and consolidated.

The program achieved its objective to give participants a greater insight into current domestic, political, social and economic issues faced by the UK and Germany, with sessions with parliamentarians, officials and experts exploring a diverse range of topics.

Parliamentary delegations such as this provide a strong bipartisan mechanism to engage with our counterparts and support the excellent work being done by Australia's diplomatic missions and of all Australians in the UK and Germany.

Hon Teresa Gambaro MP
Delegation Leader

March 2016

OFFICIAL PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

United Kingdom

MONDAY 26 OCTOBER 2015 - LONDON	
09.30	<p>Country Briefing at Australian High Commission, United Kingdom The Hon Alexander Downer AC, High Commissioner David Lawrence, Consul General & Minister-Counsellor (Management) Erika Thompson, Acting Head, Political and Economic Branch James Kelly, Minister-Counsellor, Treasury Paul Morris, Acting Head, Australian Federal Police CPCAPT Paul Nicholas, Acting Head, Australian Defence Staff Elizabeth Hoffmann, Regional Director (Europe), Immigration and Border Protection David Crook, Senior Trade Commissioner, Austrade <i>Venue: Australia House</i></p>
11.00	<p>Meeting with Mr Speaker Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons <i>Venue: Speaker's House</i></p>
11.30	<p>Welcome and Introduction Ian Liddell-Grainger MP, Chair, CPA UK Andrew Tuggey DL, Chief Executive and Secretary, CPA UK <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
12.00	<p>Meeting with Baroness Berridge, Chair, Freedom of Religion and Belief All Party Parliamentary Group <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
13.00	<p>Roundtable Lunch with Members of Australia and New Zealand APPG Andrew Rosindell MP Baroness Hooper Gavin Shuker MP Baroness Gardner of Parkes Lord Davies of Stamford Viscount Simon Lord Howard of of Lympne Lord Anderson of Swansea <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
14.30	<p>Meeting with the Foreign Affairs Committee Adam Holloway MP Nick Beech, Second Clerk <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
15.30	<p>Citizenship and Cultural challenges in the UK, including Forced Marriage and FGM Virendra Sharma MP, Chair, 'Honour' Based Abuse APPG Baroness Cox of Queensbury, Secretary, 'Honour' Based Abuse APPG Baroness Barker, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Voluntary Sector and Social Enterprise <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>

17.00	<p>Business and economic situation in the UK Nigel Evans MP Lord Rowe-Beddoe DL <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
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TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2015 - LONDON

09.30	<p>Meeting on Political Situation in Scotland Kirsty Blackman MP, Member Scottish Affairs Committee and SNP Spokesperson for House of Lords <i>Venue: Room W4</i></p>
10.35	<p>Tour of the Houses of Parliament</p>
12.00	<p>Meeting on Defence procurement, management and infrastructure Sheryll Murray MP, PPS to Andrea Leadsom MP as Minister of State, Department for Energy and Climate Change Lord Davies of Stanford, Former Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Defence Equipment and Support), Ministry of Defence <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
13.00	<p>Meeting with Defence Committee Rt Hon. Dr Julian Lewis MP, Chair Phil Wilson MP Ruth Smeeth MP Bob Stewart MP Jim Shannon MP <i>Venue: Committee Room 8</i></p>
13.30	<p>Lunch with the Lord Levene of Portsoken KBE, Chair of 'Defence Reform: An independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence' <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
14.00	<p>Meeting on Environment and Renewable Energy Angus Brendan MacNeil MP, Chair, Energy and Climate Change Committee Glyn Davies MP <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
15.30	<p>Meeting on Foreign Aid – Private Business Partnerships Mita Samani, Business Engagement, Department for International Development Private Sector Department Jeremy Guthrie, Department for International Development, Private Sector Department (Seconded from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
16.30	<p>Meeting on Regional Infrastructure and Development Lord Berkeley, Chairman, UK Rail Freight Group Geoffrey Spence, Chief Executive, Infrastructure UK <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i></p>
18.00	<p>Evening Reception Australian High Commissioner's Residence</p>

WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2015 - LONDON	
09.00	Meeting with Lord Keen of Elie QC, Advocate General for Scotland <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i>
09.45	Meeting on City Regions – Local and regional infrastructure Graham Stringer MP, Chair, City Regions APPG <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i>
10.30	Meeting on Financial Services in the UK Stephen Hammond MP, Chair, Financial Markets and Services APPG <i>Venue: CPA Room, Westminster</i>
11.45	Observe Prime Minister’s Questions <i>Venue: Commonwealth Gallery, House of Commons Chamber</i>
12.45	Lunch hosted by Ian Liddell-Grainger MP, Chair of the CPA UK Executive Committee <i>Venue: Strangers’ Dining Room</i>

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER 2015 - EDINBURGH	
09.00	Overview of the Scottish Parliament Steven Bell, UK and International Relations Office <i>Venue: Q1.01, Queensberry House</i>
09.30	Tour of Parliament
10.30	Meeting with Cross-Party Representation of Members of the Scottish Parliament - ‘The Constitutional Debate in Scotland’ Cameron Buchanan MSP Patricia Ferguson MSP Liam McArthur MSP John Wilson MSP <i>Venue: Q1.01, Queensberry House</i>
11.40	Observe General Question Time <i>Venue: Presiding Officer’s Gallery</i>
12.00	Observe First Minister’s Questions <i>Venue: Presiding Officer’s Gallery</i>
12.30	Lunch hosted by the European and External Relations Committee Hanzala Malik MSP Anne McTaggart MSP Jamie McGrigor MSP <i>Venue: Members’ Room</i>
14.10	Meeting with the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee - ‘Scrutiny of the UK Government’s Scotland Bill; Intergovernmental Relations in the UK and Parliamentary Oversight’ Bruce Crawford MSP Mark McDonald MSP Lauchlan O’Neil MSP Stuart McMillan MSP Alec Johnson MSP <i>Venue: Q1.01, Queensberry House</i>

15.30	Meeting with the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP <i>Venue: Q1.01, Queensberry House</i>
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FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER 2015 - SCOTLAND

09.45	Meeting with representatives from ScottishPower Phil Henderson, Head of UK Government Affairs Fiona Shepherd, Energy Policy Manager, ScottishPower Renewables Gina Hanrahan, Climate & Energy Policy Officer, WWF Scotland Mark Gailey, Control Centre Manager, ScottishPower Renewables <i>ScottishPower Renewables Operations Centre</i>
11.00	Tour of Whitelee Windfarm and Visitors' Centre <i>Venue: Whitelee Visitors' Centre</i>
11.45	Meeting with Jim McOmish, Head of Distribution Network, ScottishPower <i>Venue: Whitelee Visitors' Centre</i>
12.45	Lunch with Kirsten Oswald MP (MP for East Renfrewshire) <i>Venue: Eglinton Arms, Eaglesham</i>
14.30	Meeting with representatives from Scottish Government Energy & Climate Change Directorate <i>Venue: Scottish Government Office, Glasgow</i>

SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER 2015 - GLASGOW

10.30	Meeting with representatives from BAE Systems Nigel Stewart, Commercial Director Tom Brady, Project Director Delivery, Type 26 Giles Whitefield, Business Development Director International John Morrison, Head of Operations Mike Macfarlane, Head of Programme OPV Rory Weller, External Communications Manager Paul Ellis, Assistant Director North East Asia & Pacific, UKTI DSO <i>Venue: BAE Systems, Naval Ships, Glasgow</i>
11.30	Visit Visualisation Suite and Ship Build Outfit Hall (HMS FORTH) <i>Venue: BAE Systems, Naval Ships, Glasgow</i>
12.45	Meeting with representatives from Thales Optronics Alan Stevenson, Optronics Sales Director John McDonanld, Head of Naval Optronics Business Area <i>Venue: Thales Optronics, Glasgow</i>
13.15	Tour of Thales Optronics Factory <i>Venue: Thales Optronics, Glasgow</i>

Germany

MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2015 – COLOGNE	
09.00	<p>Meeting with representatives from Cologne Institute for Economic Research Dr Hubertus Bardt, Managing Director and Chief Scientific Officer Dr Thilo Schaefer, Head, Environment, Energy and Infrastructure Department, Institute of German Economy <i>Venue: Cologne Institute for Economic Research, Cologne</i></p>
11.00	<p>Welcome by the Deputy Mayor of the City of Cologne, Ms Elfi Scho-Antwerpes MdB and visit to two institutions for refugees <i>Venues: Former DIY store, managed by the German Red Cross, and self-contained apartments, managed by Caritas, Cologne</i></p>
13.00	<p>Lunch at the Institute of Solar Research, German Aerospace Center (DLR) Mr Bernhard Milow, Program Director Energy Mr Bernhard Fuhrmann, Head Political and Economic Relations Mr Georg Lieth, Regional Manager, International Cooperation <i>Venue: German Aerospace Center, Cologne</i></p>
14.00	<p>Meeting with representatives of the Institute of Solar Research and guided tour Prof Dr Robert Pitz-Paal, Co-Director, Institute for Solar Research Prof Dr Bernhard Hoffschmidt, Co-Director, Institute for Solar Research <i>Venue: Institute of Solar Research, German Aerospace Center, Cologne</i></p>
19.30	<p>Briefing by Ambassador David James Ritchie <i>Venue: Dressler Restaurant, Berlin</i></p>

TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2015 – BERLIN	
09.30	<p>Guided tour of the Reichstag Building <i>Venue: Reichstag Building, Berlin</i></p>
11.00	<p>Meeting with Professor Norbert Lammert MdB, President of the German Bundestag <i>Venue: President's Office, Reichstag Building</i></p>
15.00	<p>Visit to the New Energy Forum in Feldheim and a visit to wind farm, bio-gas plant, and woodchip heating plant Ms Kathleen Thompson, Guide <i>Venue: Feldheim, district of the town of Treuenbrietzen in Potsdam-Mittelmark</i></p>
19.30	<p>Dinner hosted by the Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with Australia and New Zealand Volkmar Klein MdB Anja Hajduk MdB Erwin Ruddel MdB Rainer Spiering MdB <i>Venue: Gaffel Haus, Berlin</i></p>

WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2015 – BERLIN	
09.30	Meeting with Mr Uwe Beckmeyer MdB, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economics and Energy <i>Venue: Ministry for Economics and Energy, Berlin</i>
11.00	Meeting with Dr Norbert Riedel, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific at the Federal Foreign Office <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
12.15	Lunch hosted by Volkmar Klein MdB, Chairman, German-Australian-New Zealand Parliamentary Friendship Group <i>Venue: Reichstag Building Dining Rooms, Berlin</i>
13.45	Meeting with Committee on Internal Affairs Barbara Woltmann MdB <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
15.30	Meeting with Committee on Food and Agriculture Alois Gerig MdB, Chairman Friedrich Ostendorff MdB, Deputy Chairman Dr Wilhelm Preismeier MdB Katharina Landgraf MdB <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
17.30	Meeting with Committee on Internal Affairs Ansgar Heveling MdB, Chairman <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
19.30	Dinner hosted by HE Ambassador David James Ritchie with Members of the Bundestag <i>Venue: Quarre restaurant in the Hotel Adlon, Berlin</i>

THURSDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2015 – BERLIN	
08.00	Meeting with Committee on Foreign Affairs Dr Andreas Nick MdB Michael Vietz MdB <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
9.00	Meeting with Defence Committee Wolfgang Hellmich MdB, Chairman <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>
10.00	Meeting with Committee on Economic Affairs and Energy Peter Ramsauer MdB, Chairman Mark Hauptmann MdB Bernd Westphal MdB Dr Hans-Joachim Schabedoth MdB Johann Saathoff MdB <i>Venue: Paul Lobe Building, Berlin</i>