

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

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971754

31/10/97

→ Mr Downer  
↘ Mr Fischer

For Action (no deadline)

For Information

## ADVISORY PANEL

This submission seeks your decisions on the role, scope, name and membership of and the modalities for an advisory panel of academic and other experts on issues relevant to Australia's foreign and trade policy. It reflects our previous discussions, together with advice from Mr Fischer about his views.

### Role

2. You have indicated that you see the advisory panel having a number of important roles. It will provide you with access to the views of a range of individuals with expertise in diverse disciplines, most of whom are normally not involved in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. Based on the experience of the White Paper Advisory Panel, I would see it also providing a sounding board for you to test ideas. In addition, it should provide an opportunity for building a constituency particularly within the academic community for the Government's foreign policy.

3. On occasions too I would expect the advisory panel to act as a counterbalance to advice being provided by the Department on particular issues. While this may pose some challenges for the Department, I think a process such as this will be useful in ensuring that the Department considers all options before making recommendations to you.

### Name and Scope

4. It will be important to choose a name that adequately covers the whole range of issues that the advisory panel will consider. Mr Fischer has expressed concern about possible overlap with the work and title of the Trade Policy Advisory Council. This concern can be addressed by focusing the advisory panel primarily on political and strategic issues. Economic and trade policy issues would still be discussed when they affect or are relevant to the panel's primary focus. Mr Fischer's concern can also be addressed by choosing a name for the group that avoids suggesting a specific economic or trade focus. I suggest that you consider one of the following options: the Foreign Affairs Council, the International Relations Advisory Council or the Foreign Relations Council.

### Membership

5. You have indicated that you favour a group of approximately 20 members. A list of 24 names is in *Attachment A* for your consideration. This list reflects your previous comments on potential members. A membership of 20 would be likely to result in about 15 members

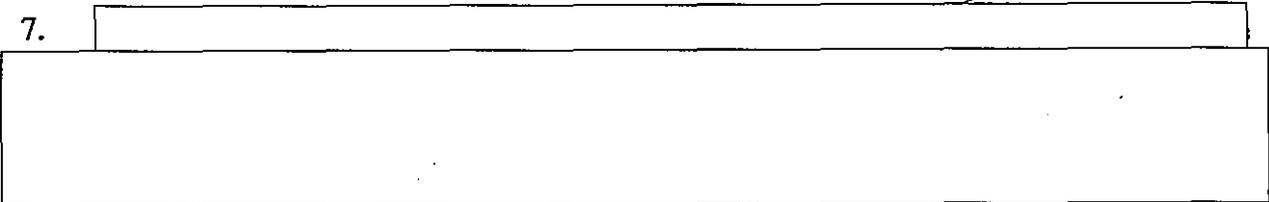
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attending each meeting. A fixed membership would not, of course, preclude you from inviting others to participate in discussion of particular issues in which they are expert.

6. I recommend that you indicate the 20 people who could be approached in the first instance. If the remaining four people on the list are suitable, we would approach them in the event that one or more of your first choices might not be available.

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

7.



**Modalities**

8. I recommend that you aim to hold three meetings per year.

9. Current academic commitments, together with the time that it will take to sort out the membership of the panel, might make it difficult to hold the first meeting this year. I suggest that we aim to hold the first meeting in February 1998, with the exact timing to be determined by your parliamentary and travel commitments. Alternatively we could try for early December.

10. You have indicated that you favour a format similar to that used for the meetings of the White Paper Advisory Panel. This would be based on a meeting being held in conjunction with dinner, either at Parliament House or in the R.G. Casey building.

11. To get the most out of these meetings it will be important to focus on particular topics to be chosen in advance by you (some possible topics are listed in paragraph 15). The Department could prepare a short (one page or less) paper setting out some of the interesting and pertinent questions and highlighting the key issues of interest to stimulate discussion. This would also be provided to panellists.

12. You may also want to encourage panellists to propose topics for discussion or prepare papers for consideration by the panel.

13. In addition to assisting if required in preparing discussion papers, I envisage the Department being involved:

- in preparing a brief record of the main points raised at the meetings, when necessary;
- in looking after logistical and other arrangements; and
- through attendance at the meetings.

Subject to your agreement, I propose that the Department be represented at Secretary or Deputy Secretary level at each meeting, with a decision on whether anyone else (such as the division head responsible for the primary topic to be discussed) should participate to be taken in light of the agenda. Including a note taker, I suggest no more than three Departmental officers at a meeting.

14. I see no need for any full time secretariat. I propose establishing a small, part-time secretariat in the Department to handle the logistical arrangements for these meetings. In effect this new function would be added to Executive Branch.

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**Possible topics**

15. The following is an indicative list of topics from amongst which you might wish to select for discussion at the first meeting of the group. Other issues might arise before the first meeting which would be more topical.

- . Prospects for Asian economic growth and the implications for Australia;
- . The implications for Australia of EU expansion and EMU;
- . Climate change: Australian and global interests;
- . Australia's long-term approach to regional security issues;
- . Global and regional adjustments to the expansion of China's economy and influence; and
- . Prospects for Australia's engagement with Latin American countries.

**Costs**

16. A meeting held over dinner and including one night's accommodation, business-class airfares and transfers to and from the airport and hotel would cost approximately \$800 for a participant travelling from Sydney and \$1300 for one travelling from Adelaide. (These figures are based on the cost of White Paper Advisory Panel meetings, and include airfares plus \$200 for accommodation, \$70 for dinner and \$80 for transport.)

17. Total estimated costs for three meetings, each attended by twenty panellists (one-quarter from Canberra, half from Sydney or Melbourne and the other quarter from Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart and Perth) would be in the order of \$48,000 per annum. These costs are very modest for the potential gains.

18. These figures exclude DFAT's administrative costs which should be very small. I am also assuming that no consultancy fees would be payable.

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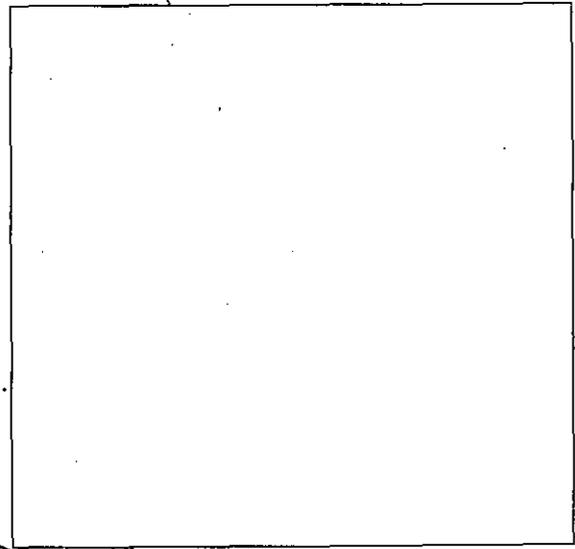
- 19. I recommend you
  - a. indicate which name you prefer for the proposed group;
  - b. choose 20 people from those listed in Attachment A or otherwise whom you wish to approach to be members;
  - c. agree that the group meet three times per year under your chairmanship;
  - d. agree that the first meeting be held in February 1998.

*Philip Flood*

**Philip Flood**  
(Secretary)

- (a) **FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL**  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COUNCIL  
FOREIGN RELATIONS COUNCIL
- (b) NAMES INDICATED IN ATTACHMENT A
- (c) **AGREED** / NOT AGREED
- (d) **AGREED** / NOT AGREED

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**PLEASE DISCUSS**

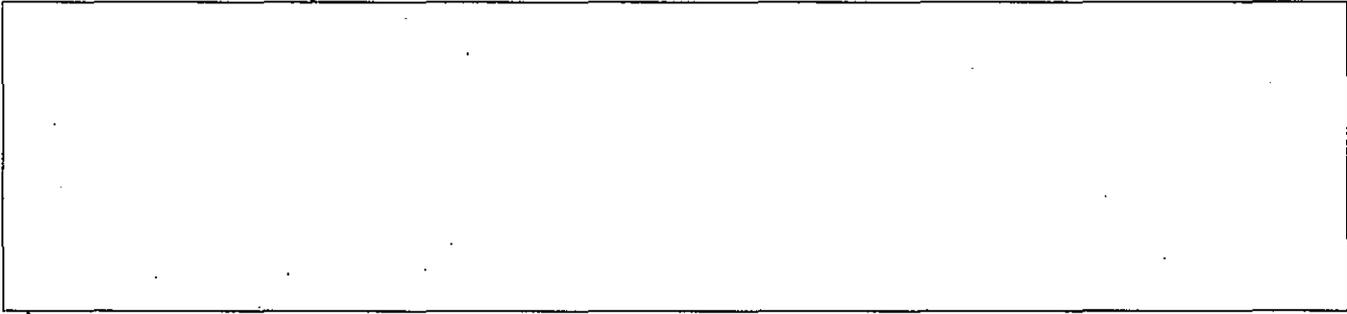
*Alexander Downer*

**ALEXANDER DOWNER**

*2/11/97*

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**List of Possible Members**

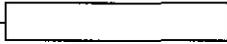


X Paul Dobb

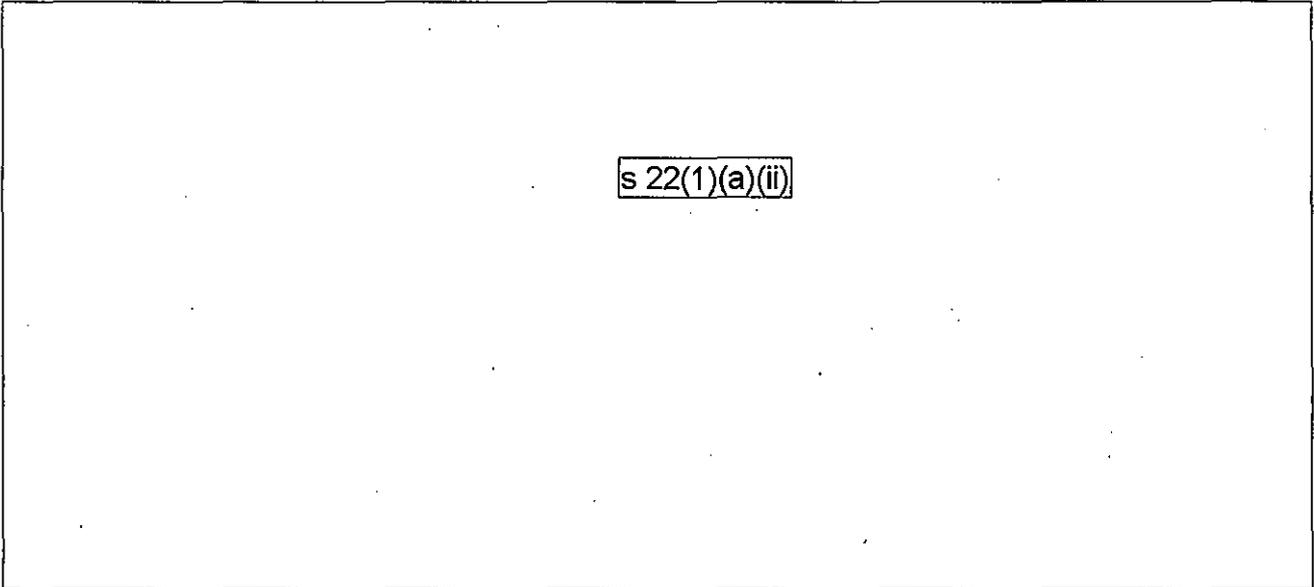
Professor and Director, Strategic and Defence  
Studies Centre, ANU

1st choice Reserve

s 47F(1)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)



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## PROPOSED MEMBERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

TITLE	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	POST NOM	POSITION, ORG, ADDRESS	PHONE NO, CONTACT	FAX NO.	COMMENTS
s 22(1)(a)(ii)							
Professor	Paul	Dibb		Head Strategic and Defence Studies Centre Australian National University CANBERRA ACT 0200	[Redacted] s 47F(1)	[Redacted] s 47F(1)	

TITLE	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	POS NOM	POSITION, ORG, ADDRESS	PHO NO, CONTACT	FAX NO.	COMMENTS
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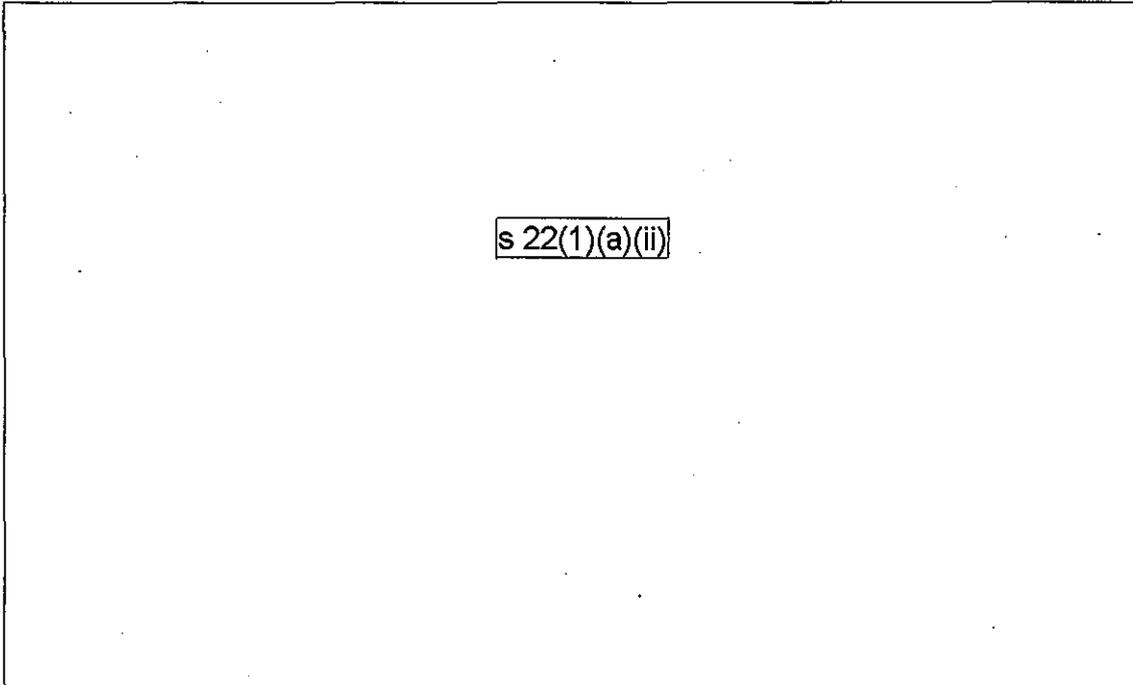
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**Foreign Affairs Council**

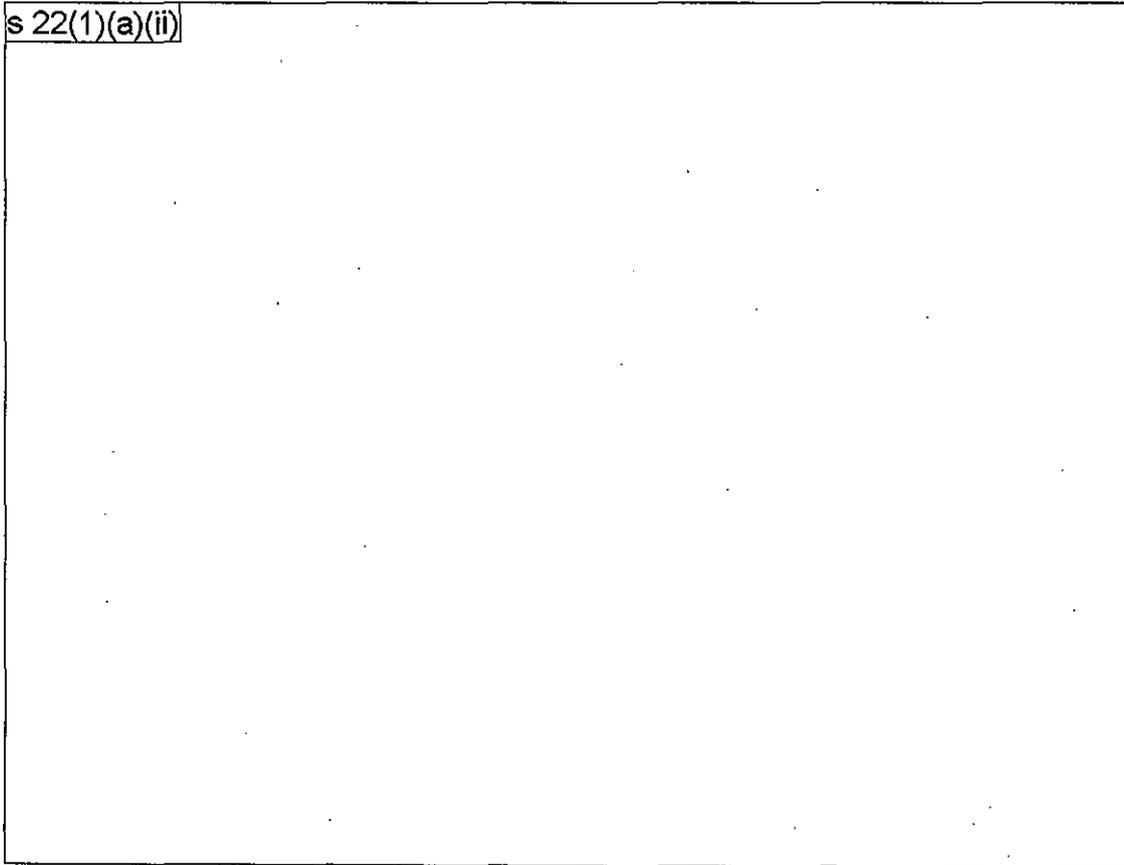


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Professor Paul Dibb AM

Head  
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre  
ANU

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



s 22(1)(a)(ii)

13 November 1997

Foreign Affairs Council

Telephone message to prospective members:

- Mr Downer, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is proposing to invite you to join the Foreign Affairs Council
- a letter will be sent shortly (drafting being done by EXB)
- the main points are:
  - to advise on broad foreign affairs issues and act as a sounding board
  - meet 3 times a year over dinner in Canberra
  - topics will be nominated before each meeting
  - the Council will be high level