

1980-81

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OVERSEAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT BILL 1981

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

(Circulated by authority of the Minister for Communications, the Right Honourable I McC Sinclair)

OUTLINE

The Government has approved in principle the establishment of a national satellite communications system ("system"). One of the options for management of the system being considered by the Government is the establishment of a company. The Bill will allow the Overseas Telecommunications Commission ("Commission"), with the approval of the Minister, to -

- (a) participate in the formation and management of such a company (if the Government decides that the system should be operated by a company and that the Commission should participate in such a company); and
- (b) provide technical services on a commercial basis to -
 - (i) a company operating the system (whether or not the Commission is participating in that company); and
 - (ii) overseas Governments and bodies for the purpose of allowing use of the facilities of the system in neighbouring countries.

NOTES ON CLAUSES

- Clause 1 Fixes the citation of the Bill and defines "Principal Act".
- Clause 2 Provides that the Bill will come into operation on a date to be fixed by Proclamation.
- Clause 3 Defines "space station" (ie satellite component of the system) for the purposes of the Bill.
- Clause 4 Provides that the Commission may, with the Minister's consent, exercise its powers relating to setting up and maintaining the satellite system in neighbouring regions. Intended to facilitate ancilliary and incidental work by the Commission to integrate e.g. Papua New Guinea and the South West Pacific nations into the system, if appropriate.
- Clause 5 Allows the Commission, with the Minister's consent,
- (a) to form, or participate in the formation of, a company which will establish and operate the satellite system in accordance with the relevant legislation;
 - (b) to participate in all aspects of the operations of the Company as an ordinary shareholder; and
 - (c) to provide technical assistance to the company
- and provides for the Commission to dispose of its interest in the company if the company ceases to operate the satellite system as its principal business.

