

1984

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REGISTRATION OF DEATHS ABROAD BILL 1984

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

(Circulated by authority of the Minister for Foreign
Affairs, Mr Bill Hayden, M.P.)

OUTLINE

The purpose of this Bill is to permit the registration of deaths abroad of Australian citizens, Australian residents, and recipients of Australian pensions, allowances and benefits. The deaths of persons on Australian ships and aircraft, and of persons who die on ships or aircraft travelling to or from Australia may also be registered in cases where such registration is not currently provided for in State or Territory legislation.

The absence of legislation to register such deaths creates difficulties for the personal representatives of deceased Australians attempting to settle estates, inhibits Australia conforming to certain international practices and allows scope for abuse of passports and social security provisions. In addition, the Australian Bureau of Statistics requires information on Australian citizens and residents who die overseas to provide more complete data in areas such as population predictions.

This Bill establishes a Register of Deaths Abroad and provides for the appointment of a Registrar. It is expected that the Registrar will operate under the authority of the A.C.T. Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages and that the Register of Deaths Abroad will be maintained by the A.C.T. Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Only deaths which cannot be registered in any other Australian jurisdiction may be registered in the Register of Deaths Abroad. Deaths registered in an overseas country may also be registered in the Register of Deaths Abroad.