



DEPARTMENT OF  
**FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICES**

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Anne MacGregor  
Co-founder  
Southern Cross Group  
1884 1/2 Ontario Place NW  
Washington DC 20009  
USA

Dear Anne

## **SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

I am writing to advise you that a Social Security Agreement between Australia and the United States of America (USA) has been signed. The Agreement is expected to begin operating on 1 October 2002, after the relevant legislation is passed and other necessary changes have been made in both countries.

As part of Australia's treaty making process it is usual to consult widely before taking definitive treaty action. I am writing to seek the views of parties who may have an interest in the Agreement before we prepare documentation for the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Treaties and table both the Agreement and a National Interest Analysis in Parliament.

Australia already has similar agreements operating with Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Malta, The Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Agreements are beneficial and do not take away existing rights.

Under the Agreement, Australia and the United States will each broadly share the support of those people who have spent part of their working life in both countries. People will be able to move between Australia and the USA knowing that their pension rights are recognised in both countries

For Australia, the Agreement covers Age Pension, Disability Support Pension for the severely disabled, pensions payable to widowed persons and Carer Payment (for the partner's of Age or Disability Support Pensioners). For the USA, the Agreement covers Federal old-age, survivor and disability benefits.

The Agreement also includes provisions regulating compulsory contributions in respect of work performed by people sent temporarily between Australia and the USA. These

provisions will avoid the need for contributions to be paid into both countries systems in respect of the same work.

The Agreement will potentially benefit Australia's population of around 50,000 US-born residents and any other residents who may have worked in the US. Many former Australian residents now living in the US are also expected to benefit.

An explanation of the Agreement and how it may assist people to access social security benefits from both countries is attached.

The text of the Agreement is available on our Internet site at:  
<http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/international/usa-nav.htm>.

If you would like to offer views on the proposed Agreement please write before 18 January 2002 to:

Assistant Secretary  
International Branch  
Department of Family and Community Services  
PO Box 7788  
CANBERRA MAIL CENTRE ACT 2610

or email: [international.branch@facs.gov.au](mailto:international.branch@facs.gov.au).

If you would like more information or have any questions please contact:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Email</b>
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Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Roger Barson  
Assistant Secretary  
International Branch

30 November 2001