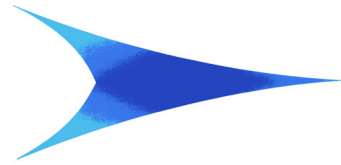


The Southern Cross Group

Promoting Mobility in the Global Community



Name
Address

28 December 2000

Dual Nationality under Australian Law

Dear

The Southern Cross Group was founded in Brussels in January 2000 by a number of expatriates, primarily of Australian nationality. Our purpose is to work for the removal of legal and practical barriers to global mobility.

One of our focus issues at the moment is that of dual nationality under Australian law. You may already be aware that section 17 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* presently provides for the loss of Australian citizenship on the voluntary acquisition of another. The Southern Cross Group is advocating the repeal of this provision, following the report of the Australian Citizenship Council in February 2000, which also recommended repeal.

Comprehensive information about this issue and links to relevant documentation are provided on our website at www.southern-cross-group.org. The SCG feels that section 17 is no longer appropriate in an age of globalization. In light of the current discussion in Australia on "brain drain", we believe that repeal should be a part of the Government's strategy to make sure that talented Australians overseas maintain their links with Australia and eventually return there. Almost everyone who has lost their citizenship under this provision has taken another nationality for purely practical reasons, in order to simplify their lives in the countries in which they live, for example for immigration or tax purposes. Australian citizenship law already recognizes that individuals can be loyal to more than one country by allowing up to 5 million Australian citizens to legally hold dual citizenship as a result of naturalization or birthright.

Following meetings in Canberra and Sydney in December with key people, it has become clear that the decision whether or not to introduce legislation into Parliament to repeal section 17 now rests very much in the hands of Prime Minister John Howard. We believe that his decision will probably be made in late January or early February 2001.

The Southern Cross Group is presently finalizing an "Open Letter to the Prime Minister" which will be sent to Mr Howard in the next few days and which will then be posted to our website. We are asking Australians who share our view that section 17 should be repealed to visit our website, have a look at the letter, and then contact the Prime Minister themselves in the next few weeks, endorsing the letter if they feel able to do so, and at the same time making the Prime Minister aware of their own personal situation, and the importance of the repeal of this provision for them, or the effect it has already had on them and their families, or, if they already legally hold dual nationality, the difference this has made for them.

We believe that the repeal of section 17 is an issue with which all Australians should be concerned. We hope that you will pass on this letter to others in your company who may be affected. Should you have any queries or require further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

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