

## Outcome 3

Public understanding in Australia and overseas of Australia's foreign and trade policy and a positive image of Australia internationally

### OUTPUT 3.1

#### EFFECTIVENESS

Public information and media services on Australia's foreign and trade policy

Projecting a positive image of Australia internationally

Freedom of information and archival research and clearance

#### QUALITY AND QUANTITY

### ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR OUTCOME 3

#### QUALITY AND QUANTITY



## PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR OUTCOME 3

### **Effectiveness indicators—overall achievement of the outcome**

Indicators to assist in assessing the success of the department's contribution to the achievement of this outcome are:

- Australians provided with comprehensive, relevant, up-to-date information on Australia's foreign and trade policy
- Effective promotion of accurate and positive perceptions of Australia overseas.

TABLE 12. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY FOR OUTCOME 3

Public understanding in Australia and overseas of Australia's foreign and trade policy and a positive image of Australia internationally

	2004-05 Budget and Supplementary Additional Estimates (\$'000)	Actual 2004-05 (\$'000)	Variation (actual less budget) (\$'000)	Budget 2005-06 (\$'000)
<b>Administered expenses</b>				
Grants and contributions	21 899	22 086	187	22 376
Australia's participation at 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan*	26 722	28 961	2 239	8 499
<b>Total administered expenses</b>	<b>48 621</b>	<b>51 047</b>	<b>2 426</b>	<b>30 875</b>
<b>Price of departmental outputs</b>				
Output 3.1—Public information services and public diplomacy	50 358	50 842	484	50 595
<b>Total price of departmental outputs</b>	<b>50 358</b>	<b>50 842</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>50 595</b>
<b>Appropriation from government for departmental outputs</b>				
	49 812	50 098	286	49 960
Revenue from other sources	546	744	198	635
<b>Total resourcing for Outcome 3 (Price of departmental outputs plus administered expenses)</b>	<b>98 979</b>	<b>101 889</b>	<b>2 910</b>	<b>81 470</b>

\* A component of 2005 World Expo Aichi, Japan's expenses are funded by private contribution. The total sponsorship revenue received in 2004-05 was \$2.244m. There is no over-budget in this expense item.

	2004-05 Budget and Supplementary Additional Estimates	2004-05 Actual	2005-06 Estimate
<b>Average staffing level (number)*</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>224</b>

\* Includes overseas locally engaged staff.

## OUTPUT 3.1:

Public information services and public diplomacy

### 3.1.1 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MEDIA SERVICES ON AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN AND TRADE POLICY

#### Overview

There was significant public and media focus on the department's work over the year, due in large measure to the Indian Ocean tsunami, our management of high-profile consular cases and a number of significant foreign and trade policy developments. The challenges presented by the international security environment and their impact on the department's programs and operations received a high level of attention.

We pursued a strategic approach to the media, contributing to balanced media coverage of major foreign and trade policy initiatives, such as negotiations for free trade agreements and the Counter-Terrorism White Paper, and events including the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Leaders' Summit in Laos and the Asia–Pacific Nuclear Safeguards Conference in Sydney. The Enhanced Cooperation Program with Papua New Guinea, the Australia–East Timor maritime boundary and resource issues negotiations, and the Doha Round of World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations also attracted strong media and public interest.

The department provided information to the media through briefings in Australia and overseas and through the production of public affairs materials used by posts and disseminated on our websites. We actively promoted the Government's foreign and trade policy agenda, where necessary correcting inaccurate or negative media reporting in Australia and overseas.

We developed and conducted public diplomacy programs designed to advance an accurate and contemporary view of Australia and to promote our cultural assets. The department's visits programs—targeting international media representatives, opinion makers and cultural visitors—generated significant and balanced international coverage about Australia via influential media outlets, and created new opportunities for Australian artists in the global market.

Australia's participation in the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan presented an important opportunity to project an image of Australia as technologically sophisticated and culturally diverse and harmonious. Our presence at the Aichi World Expo highlighted the importance of the Australia–Japan relationship. Our pavilion showcased Australia as a leading business, tourism and education destination.

The Internet continued to be the department's principal tool for communicating advice and information quickly to mass audiences in Australia and overseas. We used it strategically to support whole of government exercises, such as the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. Specific websites developed for key government programs such as the Australia Group, the Cairns Group, the 2006 Australia–Japan Year of Exchange and passport services, underscored the importance of effective website management in achieving core public diplomacy and broader policy objectives.



*The staff of the Australian Pavilion at the 2005 World Exposition Aichi, Japan. The Expo ran from 25 March until 25 September 2005. DFAT staff in front from left: Peter Sams (Pavilion Director), Paul Molloy (Deputy Commissioner-General), Andrew Todd (Commissioner General) and Tom Menadue (Director, Business Liaison and Protocol).*

*Photo: Terry Hope*

## Media services

The department's active and systematic engagement with Australian and international media, including through a 24-hour service, facilitated a high level of informed and positive coverage of foreign and trade policy issues.

We responded to 8700 requests for information from Australian and international media, including rural, regional and online media, community radio, pay television and industry publications. This represented an increase of some 2000 enquiries over the previous year, resulting from interest in high-profile consular cases, including the tsunami disaster, the Douglas Wood Iraq hostage case and drugs cases involving Australians overseas.

We provided portfolio ministers, the Parliamentary Secretary and the Prime Minister's Office with strategic media advice and support for events and initiatives. These included major events such as the Athens Olympics, the 90th Anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign at Anzac Cove, the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Leaders' Summit in Laos, the APEC Ministerial and Leaders' Meetings in Chile, the Asia–Pacific Nuclear Safeguards Conference in Sydney and the Pacific Islands Forum in Apia.

Issues of significant media interest included the terrorist attack on the Australian embassy in Jakarta, the Australia–United States Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA), the Enhanced Cooperation Program with Papua New Guinea, the Counter-Terrorism White Paper, the first anniversary of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, the Australia–Indonesia Partnership for Reconstruction and Development, Australia–East Timor maritime boundary and resource issues negotiations, the proposed China FTA and other bilateral FTAs, and the WTO Doha Round.

The department's responsive and strategic approaches to media management continued to play an important role in supporting and promoting our portfolio priorities and ensured that portfolio ministers, the Parliamentary Secretary and the department's Senior Executive were fully informed of media interest in relevant emerging issues. Improvements in media monitoring, such as the inclusion of summaries of portfolio-relevant major electronic broadcasts into the department's daily media round-ups, enhanced our ability to anticipate and respond to negative or incorrect reporting and to provide corrections.

The department strengthened its engagement with local, national and international media. One-on-one interviews and briefings by senior departmental officers remained the most popular means of communication for journalists, and proved effective in informing and providing balance to media reports. The department arranged 225 targeted briefings of influential commentators both in Canberra and at posts, on topics such as WTO negotiations and the China Free Trade Agreement negotiations. Continuing strong media interest in portfolio matters saw the department hold 31 general media briefings on ministerial visits and on key foreign and trade policy issues, including joint press conferences with portfolio ministers and their overseas counterparts. Ministers' comments and press releases, which the department drafted, were regularly reported by the media.

The department issued over 350 media releases on behalf of portfolio ministers and the Parliamentary Secretary, 22 departmental releases, and 113 media notes.

### Website services

Public interest in free trade agreements and some high-profile consular issues led to heightened activity on the department's websites. Key content additions to the main website included a new edition of *Australia in brief* and comprehensive material on Australia's approach to negotiations for free trade agreements with Japan, ASEAN–New Zealand, Thailand, China, Malaysia, and the UAE. The department consolidated and made more visible other trade-related material by integrating it into country-specific information under our *Tradewatch* service, which includes information about the economies of and our trade with important trading partners.

On 26 December 2004, soon after the department activated the Indian Ocean tsunami crisis centre, we established a special purpose website to provide information about the Government's consular response. Consistent with whole of government interests, the department updated the website continuously for several weeks and continues to update some relevant sections.

The department established or upgraded a number of additional websites relevant to the portfolio: a new website was established for the 2006 Australia–Japan Year of Exchange; we assumed responsibility for hosting and maintaining the Australia Group website; and we updated the passports website to reflect changes introduced in the *Australian Passports Act 2005*.

The department continued to transfer the hosting of overseas post websites from local service providers to a central system in Canberra. More than 60 websites were transferred and a content management system was finalised to allow posts to maintain website content. This improvement will minimise hosting costs, allow consistency in content and presentation of website material, and ensure maintenance of website security standards.

Peak website activity occurred in May 2005, coinciding with interest in the Australia–China Free Trade Agreement and high-profile consular cases. Each week the website provided an average of 19GB of data, attracted 785 000 page-views and served more than 71 000 unique users. In addition, the *smartraveller* website recorded 217 000 page-views per week.

### Trade advocacy and outreach

The department's wide-ranging trade advocacy and outreach strategy uses print and electronic media extensively to inform the Australian public of the benefits of international trade. The Government's active free trade agreement agenda, including the implementation of two new FTAs and the launch of four new negotiations, was the main focus during the year.

The department's website provided detailed information on trade policy developments as soon as it was available, including detailed and up-to-date information on existing or potential FTA negotiations. The Tradewatch service was upgraded and made more accessible.

We published regular electronic newsletters on Doha Round developments as well as on Australia's participation in WTO dispute settlement. We also began preparations for a publication on a decade of WTO dispute settlement. We continued to publish on our website, where possible, Australia's submissions in WTO disputes.

Australia's revised offer in the WTO services negotiations was made public as soon as it was tabled in Geneva on 26 May 2005 and is available on the departmental website. The document was accompanied by a plain English explanatory note to help industry, community groups and others understand what is covered in the offer.



[www.fta.gov.au](http://www.fta.gov.au)

The Government's new free trade agreement (FTA) website, launched by Mr Vaile on 27 April 2005, is a one-stop online resource to help Australian businesses make the most of Australia's FTAs. It contains a wealth of practical information compiled by Australian government agencies to help Australian businesses understand and take advantage of our FTAs with the United States, Thailand, Singapore and New Zealand. Its development was coordinated by the department in conjunction with Austrade.

[www.fta.gov.au](http://www.fta.gov.au) helps businesses to:

- learn about the wide range of services available to exporters and investors from across the entire Australian government sector
- find practical guides on doing business in-market
- learn about upcoming trade fairs and missions
- subscribe to useful e-newsletters about trade and investment opportunities.

There was particular public interest in the completion of the joint feasibility study and subsequent launch of FTA negotiations with China. The department maintained a steady flow of information to a broad audience of interested parties, including through close liaison with the media, wide dissemination of newsletters and fact sheets, and a broad range of speaking engagements and consultations to build understanding of why Australia is pursuing an FTA, and to seek stakeholder views. We undertook a similar broad range of communications activities to promote the launch of new bilateral FTA negotiations. The department also ensured there was an extensive information campaign in place related to Australia's revised offer in WTO services negotiations, both in Australia and overseas.

The department's key messages about the benefits of trade and about the Government's trade policy agenda have continued to be reinforced by people-to-people links with industry and community groups across all states and territories, including through the outreach activities of Mr Vaile, Mr Billson and senior departmental officials across the country.

### Trade publications

To promote the Government's trade policies the department produced or commissioned a number of targeted publications.

*Negotiating free trade agreements: A guide* was aimed at officials involved in such negotiations for the first time. It explained the main negotiating steps needed to arrive at an agreement. The guide was launched at the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting in Jeju, Korea in June 2005.

*Open economies delivering to people, 2005: Regional integration and outcomes in the APEC region* contributed to APEC's Mid-Term Stocktake of progress towards the Bogor Goals of free and open trade in the region. Produced by the Centre for International Economics, the report outlined the significant liberalisation of trade and investment in the region since APEC's formation, and quantified the major social and welfare benefits delivered to the people of the Asia-Pacific, particularly within developing economies.

*APEC: Best practice in secure trade* highlighted the active role APEC has played in addressing counter-terrorism issues, particularly their impact on regional and global trade. It examined the experiences of individual APEC economies in securing their trade, to identify best practices that may help others develop responses.

*Business case for standards* (in conjunction with Standards Australia) highlighted the business case for adopting internationally recognised standards in the APEC region, and suggested ways to enhance the development of standards and conformance infrastructures.

*Volume III: Asian agrifood demand trends and outlook to 2010*, and a special stand-alone report, *China: Asian agrifood megamarket*, formed part of the 'Subsistence to Supermarket II: Agrifood Globalisation and Asia' series. They analysed the opportunities for the Australian agrifood sector in Asia.

## Economic analysis

The department produced four new economic analytical reports on topics reflecting Australia's foreign and trade policy priorities.

Following the restoration of law and order by the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, the department published *Solomon Islands: Rebuilding an island economy*. It focused on the next most pressing challenge—economic recovery. The report analysed the causes of the island nation's rapid economic decline and the reforms necessary to rebuild the economy. We attracted around 100 people to the Brisbane launch.

*Papua New Guinea: The road ahead* examined recent economic developments in Papua New Guinea. The report found that after years of contraction, macroeconomic conditions in Papua New Guinea had improved thanks to favourable commodity prices and a number of successful policy reforms. But greater agricultural productivity, increased investment and a stronger private sector were needed to create income and employment opportunities as mine deposits ran out and oil reserves depleted.



Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Bruce Billson, launching the report 'Australia and the United States: Trade and Multinationals in a New Era', at Parliament House, June 2005. Looking on is Nicholas Coppel, Executive Director, Economic Analytical Unit.

The report was launched in both Canberra and Port Moresby and the main findings were presented at a major industry conference in Sydney.

*Malaysia: An economy transformed* analysed Malaysia's strong growth performance and the path to further economic development in the context of improved bilateral relations and a possible FTA. The report gave prominence to strong education links between Australia and Malaysia. It was launched in Canberra and Kuala Lumpur.

*Australia and the United States: Trade and the multinationals in a new era* found that Australian companies could realise the benefits of the Australia–United States Free Trade Agreement by working with US multinationals. The report analysed the importance of US multinationals to the further internationalisation of the Australian economy.

## Commercial and statistical services

The department produces a wide range of statistical publications about Australia's international trade relationships. They assist policy-making and business decisions and contribute to community understanding of trade issues. In 2004–05, 4155 publications were distributed to a wide range of users in the public and private sectors.

We launched a new quarterly compendium publication, *Trade topics: A quarterly review of Australia's international trade*. The publication brought together a wide range of statistics on Australia's international trade. It included articles on Australia's trade policy and performance. The department introduced three electronic publications focusing on regional trade—*Australia's trade with East Asia*, *Australia's trade with the European Union*, and *Australia's trade with the Americas*.

We produced *Trade at a glance*, a pocket-sized free booklet summarising concisely Australia's trade with the rest of the world, including key policies and statistics.

Much of the department's statistical information is available either at no charge or on a fee-for-service basis for Australian businesses and researchers interested in overseas markets. Our statistical consultancy service answered 8812 such queries.

A set of country/economy fact sheets, including economic and demographic data for more than 165 of Australia's trading partners and summaries of their trade with Australia, is available on the department's website at [www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs). The fact sheets are a valuable resource for Australian business people travelling overseas.

## Other public information activities

The department's website continued to provide an accessible one-stop shop to a range of departmental publications with information about Australia's foreign and trade policy. These publications include recent policy white papers, past annual reports, the department's corporate plan, ministerial and departmental media releases and major speeches. This material increases awareness and understanding of Australia's foreign and trade policy among domestic and international audiences. The department's publications officer can be contacted through the website.

## Speeches

The department's speechwriters, in consultation with ministers' offices and relevant areas of the department, prepared 176 speeches for ministers and the department's Senior Executive.

## Consultative activities

To promote consultation with Australian community groups that helped inform policy processes, the department supported several standing consultative bodies chaired by Mr Downer, Mr Vaile and Mr Billson. They included the Foreign Affairs Council (Mr Downer), the Australia International Cultural Council (Mr Downer), the Trade Policy Advisory Council (Mr Vaile), the World Trade Organization Advisory Council (Mr Vaile) and the Smartraveller Consultative Group (Mr Billson).

We conducted biannual human rights consultations with non-government organisations (NGOs). Where possible, Mr Downer participated in the consultations, covering the full range of human rights issues. The National Consultative Committee on International Security Issues, replacing the former National Consultative Committee on Peace and Disarmament, met for the first time in April 2005. The new committee's remit is better aligned with the Government's policy priorities. We also continued to liaise with the Australian Network of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

## Treaties

The Australian Treaties Database lists the treaties signed or that came into force each year. We maintain the database at [www.info.dfat.gov.au/treaties](http://www.info.dfat.gov.au/treaties). The department links the database to all government legislation and regulations passed or issued relevant to Australian treaty action since 1983.

### 3.1.2 PROJECTING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF AUSTRALIA INTERNATIONALLY

#### Overview

International media reporting of Australia covered a range of issues, including our regional cooperation initiatives on security and counter-terrorism, the visits to Australia of the presidents of Indonesia and Malaysia, free trade discussions with China and Japan, Australia's position on Iraq and the deployment of Australian Defence Force personnel, Australia's strong economic performance and our quick response in providing humanitarian aid in the wake of the tsunami disaster.

There was consistently positive media coverage of our posts' promotion of Australian culture, including Indigenous art, development assistance programs, and Australia as a provider of high-quality education opportunities, a competitive exporter, and an investment and tourism destination.

Monitoring of international reporting on Australia enabled the department to respond quickly through targeted public affairs material and early placement of relevant material on our websites to counter media or public misconceptions. The department countered negative or inaccurate international reporting on a range of issues including the Government's immigration and asylum policies, the practice of mulesing of sheep, live sheep exports, kangaroo culling, security checks at Australian airports, Australia's stance on the Kyoto Protocol, and the security of foreign embassies and consulates in Australia.

#### International public diplomacy

Our posts overseas conducted 3143 public diplomacy briefings, events and initiatives, (not including the Aichi Expo), attracting more than 580 000 people. Developed in support of Australia's foreign and trade policy interests and designed to promote an accurate and contemporary view of Australia, these events included:

- successful public advocacy activities in Washington in support of our FTA negotiations, including through targeted media visits and the production of high-quality information materials in print and on the embassy website
- placement of articles by our ministers in influential newspapers, including an article titled *Transnational terrorism: The threat to Australia* by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Downer, which was published in Canada, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Turkey; an article by Mr Downer on *Pacific partnership to tackle HIV/AIDS*, published widely in Pacific newspapers; and an article on interfaith dialogue published widely in Asia. An article by the Minister for Trade, Mr Vaile, on Australia's revised offer in World Trade Organization (WTO) services trade negotiations was published in Malaysia and Thailand

- a *Think Australia Month*, organised by Australia's high commission in Ottawa as a series of public events across Canada to highlight Australia's accomplishments in education, trade, health research, literature and film
- a speaking tour to Abu Dhabi, Amman and Tehran by Professor Helen Garnett, Vice-Chancellor Charles Darwin University, and Ms Wendy McCarthy, Chancellor of the University of Canberra, to take part in high-level seminars on 'Women, Education and Achievement' and promote educational opportunities in Australia
- successful public advocacy in Bangkok in support of the Thailand–Australia Free Trade Agreement negotiations, by promoting the benefits of the Agreement to relevant sectors of Thai industry and government
- *Australia Week 2005*, a major promotion organised in Los Angeles by the Consulate-General in collaboration with Austrade, Tourism Australia and Qantas, which included an integrated series of high-profile activities
- using the Queen's baton relay as it travelled through Commonwealth countries on its way to Australia for the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne as a platform to disseminate wider messages about Australia and the Commonwealth.

The department worked effectively to tie in public diplomacy activities with our broader policy objectives, particularly concerning global cooperation, security and trade policy. We held four regional public diplomacy workshops that provided overseas staff—Australia-based and locally engaged—with targeted advice on the need for close integration of public diplomacy activities with foreign and trade policy objectives. Held in Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Rome and Washington, the workshops were attended by 110 staff from 54 posts and received uniformly positive feedback from participants.

The European regional workshop developed a Europe-wide public advocacy and communications strategy to deliver consistent messages in support of key Australian interests and government policies. We worked similarly with Americas posts to identify key audiences and develop messages for North America, Latin America and the Caribbean that would deal with bilateral, regional and international strategic issues. The workshops identified coordination and resource-sharing mechanisms to help smaller posts in their public advocacy of Australian policy positions on security and global cooperation and trade policy, as well as the projection of Australia as a multicultural, democratic, innovative and technologically advanced nation.

Promotion of Australia's strengths in science and conservation was enhanced by the extensive positive publicity generated through the gift to Taiwan's National Museum of Natural Science of specimens of Wollemi pine.

The department continued to provide a weekly key messages brief summarising government views on current foreign, trade and economic developments and policy issues for use by overseas posts to advocate Australian positions. Posts distributed the brief to representatives of other Australian government agencies and locally engaged staff and drew on it widely in contacts with local media, industry and government officials.

We produced an updated and expanded edition of our *Public diplomacy handbook*, which provides practical advice and guidance to staff on conducting effective public diplomacy and advocacy programs.

### Public affairs material

Although the department has effectively harnessed the Internet as the key means of disseminating public affairs material, we continued to meet a significant demand for hard copy publications for direct distribution to target audiences overseas.

We produced:

- a new edition of *Australia in brief*, in both soft and hard copy, highlighting Australia's trade, investment, new economy credentials and way of life
- an Arabic-language version of our general information and wall map of Australia
- a new edition of our *Australia Fast facts* brochure, which includes comparative statistics highlighting Australia's economic, trade, information and communications technology and investment strengths.

We progressively updated our series of 65 online *Australia Now* fact sheets, and produced new titles on Australian food and wine and the Arab community in Australia.

Posts produced 231 publications with a total distribution of almost 700 000. They dealt with a variety of issues but focused primarily on bilateral relations. Our post in Beijing produced a series of fact sheets on Australia–China trade. Our post in Pretoria published a booklet, on the tenth anniversary of the first democratic elections in South Africa, 'An Enduring Partnership', covering Australia's support for a non-racial South Africa. Our post in Noumea produced a French-language book, to coincide with Anzac Day, commemorating Australian, New Zealand and French wartime cooperation.

### Special visits program

The Special Visits Program (SVP) is the department's premier visits program. It is a valuable tool for promoting Australia's foreign and trade policies. Its purpose is to bring to Australia influential or potentially influential people who, on their return home, contribute to a greater understanding of Australian policies and institutions. Through the SVP the department builds a network of international contacts relevant to Australia's interests. The department organised 32 visits during the year, including:

- two visits from China focused on legal reform issues and energy resources trade
- four visits from China for participants at the August 2004 Australia–China Free Trade Agreement Conference

- two visits from the Republic of Korea focused on finance, economic and trade issues
- a visit from Hong Kong to promote positive outcomes at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong to be held in December 2005
- a visit by the Deputy Chairman of Muhammadiyah, Dr Din Syamsuddin, contributing to the development of links with moderate Islamic leaders in Indonesia
- two visits from Malaysia: one by the Attorney-General that advanced our interests in legal services in Malaysia and the other by a Malaysian academic and strategic analyst that advanced dialogue on counter-terrorism issues
- visits from Bangladesh and Cambodia focused on counter-terrorism and, in the case of Cambodia, legal, judicial and administrative reform
- a senior visitor from Thailand looking at the Australian experience with economic restructuring, small business development, and the mining and fashion sectors
- a visit from Iraq to examine cooperation in developing Iraq's electricity infrastructure and capacity
- three visitors from Nauru, one from Papua New Guinea and one from Solomon Islands to discuss economic and governance issues
- a visit from Germany on agriculture issues
- a visitor from Turkey to advance cooperation in handling annual Gallipoli commemorations.

### **International media visitors**

The department's International Media Visits (IMV) program brings senior international journalists and commentators to Australia in support of our foreign and trade policy objectives.

A total of 33 media representatives from the following countries visited Australia under the IMV program: Argentina, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and Zimbabwe.

These visits generated significant and balanced international coverage in influential media outlets on issues such as: the continuing strong performance of the Australian economy; our trade and investment policies; Australia and ASEAN relations; regional cooperation; Australia's role in the Pacific region; trade and economic links with the Middle East; and Australia's agricultural trade liberalisation.

Highlights for the year included:

- a group visit by five Pacific island editors timed to cover the first anniversary of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and explain Australia's broader Pacific policies in advance of the Pacific Islands Forum
- a visit by a group of senior journalists from ASEAN nations to report on regional cooperation and the strength of Australia–ASEAN ties
- a visit by three editors from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait, which coincided with a visit by the UAE Minister for Economy and Planning for a Joint Ministerial Commission meeting, to increase their understanding of Australia's trade and economic linkages with the region
- a visit by three Japanese media representatives to publicise Australia's involvement in the Aichi Expo
- a group visit by three senior Chinese editors to report on the trade and investment relationship between Australia and China.

All visits attracted favourable comment from participants and resulted in extensive media coverage, including: the production of two special programs of more than ten minutes each by Japan's CBC TV and a three-part series in the *Chunichi Shimbun* newspaper (circulation 2 750 000) on our involvement in the Aichi Expo; a series of three articles in Thailand's *The Nation* newspaper on Australia's relations with Thailand and the region; positive articles in the *Fiji Times* on RAMSI; and three articles in the Singapore *Straits Times* on Australia–ASEAN ties.

The department's International Media Centre in Sydney continued to work closely with the resident and foreign media based in Australia by providing information and assistance on a range of issues. Media briefings were arranged with ministers and senior officials, often on specific issues such as Australia's free trade agreements, Australia's relations with Solomon Islands and our role with RAMSI, and the East Timor maritime boundary and resource issues negotiations. The department organised a special Prime Ministerial briefing for regional media on the eve of his visits to Japan and China.

The department arranged a familiarisation visit to Canberra for a group of 14 Sydney-based foreign media representatives, which included interviews with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

## Cultural visitors

The department continued to manage the Cultural Awards Scheme (CAS). Fifteen CAS participants from 12 countries visited Australia in 2004–05, including arts media representatives, festival directors, performing arts presenters, gallery and museum directors, and chief curators.

The visits, several planned in cooperation with key partners such as the Australia Council and the Melbourne Art Fair, gave CAS participants an opportunity to meet leaders in the Australian cultural community, preview touring productions, profile individual arts practitioners and participate in Australia's major arts and film festivals.

They provided a platform to develop future collaborative projects and create significant opportunities for the programming of Australian performing arts work internationally. Several emerging Australian visual artists were selected to exhibit at the Yokohama Triennale in September 2005. Arising from the visit of Guy Boyce, Artistic Director of the Christchurch Festival, Australia and New Zealand will collaborate artistically in developing proposals for consideration under the Major Festivals Initiative, and four Australian productions were earmarked for inclusion in the 2007 Christchurch Festival. The visit of the executive editor of *China film news* and her subsequent series of articles on Australian post-production facilities, where major Chinese films *Hero* and *House of flying daggers* were post-produced, underpinned Australia's film promotion plans for China and work on a co-production treaty. CAS participants commented very favourably on the organisation and value of their visits in providing accurate, contemporary perceptions of Australia.

The department initiated a new publication—*CAS newsletter*—designed to publicise the CAS program and strengthen the department's links with the arts industry. Two editions of the newsletter are circulated each year to about 400 supporters of the program.

## Promotion of Australia through our cultural assets

The department continued to use art and culture as a platform for projecting a positive and contemporary image of Australia internationally.

### *Australia International Cultural Council*

The Australia International Cultural Council (AICC) is the peak consultative group for the promotion of Australian culture internationally. Chaired by Mr Downer, it brings together representatives from government, the arts and business to project a positive image of Australia that enhances our foreign and trade policy interests and to promote the export of Australian cultural product.

The department provides the AICC secretariat and plays a lead role in delivering AICC programs, particularly through our network of overseas posts. We work closely with the Australia Council and the Australian Film Commission, both of which are represented on the AICC.

Major AICC cultural programs launched in 2005 included the first stage of a two-year program in the United Kingdom titled *Undergrowth*, which incorporates dance and film elements in its diverse range of activities, and *oZmosis*, a program featuring contemporary arts and design in Singapore. The AICC also funded cultural events to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Australia's dialogue partnership with ASEAN, supported the visit of Australian jazz performers to Japan as a follow-up to the *Ancient Future—Australian Arts, Japan 03* promotion in Tokyo, continued the successful Embassy Roadshow series of mini film festivals, and supported the development of OzArts Online—an interactive service to promote Australian art overseas.

At the 11th AICC meeting, held on 25 February 2005, members agreed to a forward program involving targeted promotions in: India (2006–07), France and Malaysia (both 2007), the United States (2008–09), Indonesia (2009) and China and Germany (both 2010).

#### *Supporting Australian artists overseas*

The Cultural Relations Discretionary Grant (CRDG) Program provides seed funding to help high-quality Australian artists and companies take their work overseas. The objective of the program is to project internationally an image of a creative, sophisticated, diverse and technologically advanced Australia in support of the Government's key foreign and trade policy objectives.

The CRDG program provided funding for 28 projects in Italy, France, Austria, Malta, the Netherlands, Korea, Singapore, China, the United States, Mexico, Turkey, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, New Caledonia, Finland, Portugal, Germany, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Brazil. Funding was provided to a diverse range of artistic disciplines and companies, including: NovaMedia, which performed at Art Electronica, the world's foremost international festival for electronic and new media arts held at Linz, Austria; cutting-edge contemporary dance exponents BalletLab, which toured their production of *Amplification* to the Seoul International Dance Festival in Korea; the exhibition of *Our place: Indigenous Australia now*, a comprehensive showcasing of the culture of Australia's Indigenous peoples, at the National Museum of China in Beijing; and performances by the Australian Art Orchestra at the Festival Centro Historico in Mexico.

The department promoted Australia's reputation as a tolerant, multicultural society by selecting a wide range of artists, including youth, multicultural and Indigenous representatives. CRDG projects facilitated direct links between Australia's arts and culture industries and overseas markets, helping to promote Australia's cultural exports.

The department funded the Australian Visual Arts Touring Program and Fine Music Touring Program, which projected a positive image of contemporary Australian cultural excellence and diversity through the presentation of high-quality Australian visual art and music to South and South-East Asia.

#### *Indigenous Australian culture*

The department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program projects an accurate and positive image of contemporary Indigenous peoples and cultures in Australia. A major component of the program is the management of three touring Indigenous art exhibitions: *Kickin' up dust* (a photographic display of four Indigenous cultural festivals); *Kiripuranji—Contemporary art from the Tiwi Islands*; and *Seasons of the Kunwinjku* (paintings and photographs from Arnhem Land). During 2004–05, the three exhibitions were displayed in more than 19 major cities in 17 countries across Europe, South America, Africa, the Middle East, and North Asia.

Posts used exhibitions under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program as part of their public diplomacy programs to support the Government's foreign and trade policy objectives. For example, in Mauritius, the *Kiripuranji* exhibition was the centrepiece of a highly successful three-week 'Australia Festival', which incorporated Aboriginal dance performances and Australian food, wine and education promotions. *Kickin' up dust* was programmed throughout South America to coincide with Australian tourism and education promotions. The *Seasons of the Kunwinjku* toured two cities in Japan in the lead up to the Aichi World Expo, before exhibiting in the Australian Pavilion.



*Australian High Commissioner Ian McConville is joined by members of Wadumbah Aboriginal Dance Group and the women and children of The Shelter, a recipient of Direct Aid Project funding in Mauritius. Wadumbah headlined at the 2005 'Australia Festival' in Mauritius.*

The department actively supported National Reconciliation Week and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, holding events in Canberra and at many posts and encouraging posts to display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.

#### *Embassy Film Roadshow*

The department continued to support the Embassy Roadshow—a film initiative funded by the AICC and co-managed by the department and the Australian Film Commission (AFC). The program aims to project a contemporary image of Australia and to promote the Australian film industry through a series of stand-alone film mini-festivals. It has proven to be a highly effective public diplomacy tool, with posts continuing to report a strong demand from overseas audiences. The roadshow has helped generate strong local media coverage, increase networking opportunities, promote the ‘Australian brand’ in a variety of markets, and build relationships and awareness of Australia and Australian culture. The AFC maintains two sets of 45 contemporary features, a selection of shorts, and one set of ten Spanish sub-titled features, which are circulated to Australian diplomatic missions. In 2004–05, posts in 22 countries hosted Roadshow festivals in 28 cities.

#### *Sports diplomacy*

The department promoted and supported sports development and participation at all levels in the South Pacific through the Australia–South Pacific Sports Development Program. Working with the Australian Sports Commission, the department approved 24 grants to support programs in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Fiji and Niue. The sports assisted included cricket, netball, rugby union, Australian Rules football, swimming, volleyball, hockey, weightlifting and disabled sports.

### **Bilateral engagement: creating people-to-people links**

The department provides secretariats for nine bilateral foundations, councils and institutes that work with business and community groups to promote people-to-people links and positive and contemporary images of Australia. We undertook preparatory work for the establishment of two new bilateral bodies—the Australia–Malaysia Institute and the Australia–Thailand Institute—that were launched during the year.

#### *Australia–China Council*

The Australia–China Council (ACC) funded a suite of educational and cultural programs to expand people-to-people contacts and underpin the further development of bilateral relations. In the field of education, the Council provided three scholarship programs for Australian students to study in China. It continued supporting Australian studies in China, by funding two conferences, 21 research projects and Australian studies centres for teaching, publication and community activities. To promote cultural

ties, the Council supported the Australia–China Council Asialink Arts Fellowship for Melbourne sound artist Iain Mott and provided an additional 41 grants for projects including martial arts, education and Indigenous music.

#### *Australia–India Council*

The Australia–India Council (AIC) continued to promote mutual understanding, in support of Australia’s foreign and trade policy interests, through bilateral contacts and exchanges in the arts, education (in particular Australian studies), commerce, health, social issues, environment, education, law and governance, sport, news media and film.

High-profile AIC projects included the fourth Australia–India Security Roundtable, visiting Australian Studies fellowships, support to the WA Art Gallery for an Indian exhibition, and further doctor training in HIV/AIDS, which has continued to showcase Australian expertise. Of particular note was the AIC’s support of an Australian authors’ tour. Cricket ties continued to flourish, with the AIC funding a sixth year of the Border–Gavaskar scholarship program for young Indian cricketers. A direct outcome of the AIC’s continuing work in the area of Australian studies was the launch of an Australian Studies Resource Centre within the Central Library at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Professor Ross Garnaut AO delivered the third Sir John Crawford lecture hosted by the National Centre for Applied Economic Research in New Delhi.

#### *Australia–Indonesia Institute*

The Australia–Indonesia Institute (All) maintained support for a broad range of activities to expand and strengthen bilateral people-to-people contact. The All continued the program of visits to each country by prominent Muslim community leaders to better inform perceptions of Islam in Australia and Indonesia. The Institute began a new training program in Australia for Indonesian teachers at Islamic higher education institutions to strengthen mainstream Islamic education in Indonesia. This program will continue and expand into 2006, including for a group from Aceh.

The All encouraged more focused media reporting on Indonesia by supporting a series of radio interviews with prominent Indonesians for broadcast in Australia. The Institute continued to develop an Australian studies network in Indonesian universities. The All’s support for successful exchanges and visits by students, teachers and arts performers broadened contact between young Australians and Indonesians and improved mutual knowledge about respective cultures and societies.

#### *Australia–Japan Foundation*

The Australia–Japan Foundation (AJF) was established by the *Australia–Japan Foundation Act 1976* to encourage a closer relationship between the peoples of Australia and Japan. It is a statutory body and therefore required to submit its annual report to Parliament, which contains a detailed account of its activities over the year.

The Foundation supported portfolio objectives by initiating and facilitating interaction between the two countries to expand and promote the relationship. The AJF funded educational programs including *Experience Australia* (a resource kit for Japanese primary schools) and *Discovering Australia* (a teachers' kit for Japanese high schools). The Australia–Japan Foundation library, located in the Australian embassy in Tokyo, provided a unique information service to Japanese schools, business and academic institutions. The Foundation facilitated professional exchanges among academics, teachers, teacher trainers, arts managers, bureaucrats, debaters and community groups.

#### *Australia–Korea Foundation*

The Australia–Korea Foundation (AKF) helped broaden and deepen relations with the Republic of Korea by supporting a range of commercial, cultural and educational activities. The AKF distributed the *Investigating Australia* study kit to a wider Korean audience and promoted a stronger awareness of Australia and the kit. It arranged, with the Korea–Australia Foundation, a three-month internship program for Australian business and finance students in Korea and launched an AKF–Korea Press Foundation scholarship to allow one mid-career Korean journalist to study and report on Australia for a year. The Foundation co-hosted, with the Korea Press Foundation, the *2nd Korea–Australia Media Forum*, focusing on film and new media—an area where there is strong potential to boost bilateral cooperation. It agreed with the National Institute of Korean History to work together on a history of Australian involvement in the Korean War. The AKF organised the exhibition *George Rose photographs of Korea in 1904* at the University of Adelaide, opened by Mr Downer, and arranged to print a second edition of the book based on Rose's photographs—*1904 Korea through Australian eyes*.

#### *Council on Australia Latin America Relations*

The Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR) continued to support Australia's diplomatic and trade objectives in Latin America through targeted public advocacy activities. Maintaining its business focus, the Council worked with Austrade and the Australian–Latin America Business Council (ALABC). It supported Austrade's *Australia Festival* (the largest annual promotion of Australia in Latin America) and funded a range of ALABC activities, including the production of a business newsletter for the region.

COALAR co-funded visits to Australia by two high-profile education delegations from Chile and Mexico that strengthened links in areas such as Vocational Education and Training and English language teaching. The Council implemented stage one of its cultural strategy and sent two Australian Festival Directors to Latin America. It established a tourism action group and engaged the tourism industry in opportunities to raise Australia's profile in the region as a travel destination. The Council's visits program enhanced people-to-people links between Australia and Latin America in areas such as journalism and science and technology.

### *Council for Australian–Arab Relations (CAAR)*

The Council for Australian–Arab Relations (CAAR) aims to broaden awareness and understanding between Australia and the Arab world, promote a greater understanding of mutual foreign policy interests, encourage activities that lead to mutual economic benefit and promote Australia's image in the Arab world. Initially established for a three-year period, it has now been made permanent.

Building on the previous year's program, CAAR's activities in 2004–05 included: launching online guides *Doing Business with the UAE*, *Doing Business with Saudi* and *Doing Business with Qatar* to help Australian small and medium enterprises do business in the Arab world; funding visits to Australia under the CAAR Business Speakers Program from Saudi Arabia and Lebanon; under the CAAR Young Professionals Exchange Program, placing young professionals from the UAE and Oman with educational and health institutions and government agencies in Australia and two Australians with government ministries in Oman; and visits to the region by two Australian journalists.

### *Australia–Malaysia Institute*

The department undertook the preparatory work for the establishment of the Australia–Malaysia Institute (AMI), announced by Mr Downer on 7 April 2005. The Institute's role is to enhance bilateral people-to-people and institutional links with Malaysia. Eight prominent Australians drawn from business, media and academia form the AMI's Executive Committee. At its inaugural meeting in May 2005 the Institute determined its strategic directions for the first three years. AMI Chairman Michael Abbott QC visited Malaysia in June 2005 to promote the Institute and to establish contacts with potential Malaysian partners.

### *Australia–Thailand Institute*

The department undertook preparatory work for the establishment of the Australia–Thailand Institute announced by Mr Downer on 29 June 2005. The Institute aims to build community linkages between Australia and Thailand, with particular reference to public policy, health, culture and the arts.

Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, The Hon. Tim Fisher AC, was appointed as the Chairman of the Australia–Thailand Institute Executive Committee, which includes seven other prominent Australians drawn from business, academia and the arts.

## Direct Aid Program

In 2004–05, the department disbursed \$3 696 642 in Direct Aid Program (DAP) funds, through 46 posts, to projects in over 70 countries. The DAP is a flexible small grants scheme that aims to lessen humanitarian hardship while supporting the Government's international relations and public diplomacy goals. The following examples demonstrate the diversity of projects funded:

- 'training the trainers' across Ghana, through a two-day course for women teachers to equip them to address domestic violence in their communities
- providing musical instruments for the only school for the disabled in Kiribati, to widen the skills base of students
- improving safety and hygiene at a kindergarten in Laos by installing a fence, toilets, taps and kitchen
- supplying 100 soak-pit latrines to ten villages in Pakistan, and educating the communities in hygiene.

## ABC Asia Pacific satellite television service

Now in its fourth year, the ABC Asia Pacific (ABCAP) satellite television service has continued to consolidate its reach and appeal to viewers in the Asia–Pacific region. The service is funded by the Government under contractual arrangements managed by the department. ABCAP is now available in 38 countries in the region on 155 broadcasting platforms. The service is available in approximately 8.7 million homes and over 200 000 hotel rooms.

The Government's current five-year contract with the ABC for the operation of ABCAP ends in August 2006. In June 2005, the Government decided to undertake a tender process to test the market for the most efficient and effective provider for Australia's regional television service for the period 2006–2011. The tender will open in early 2005–06.

## Australian participation in the 2005 World Expo—Aichi, Japan

Prime Minister Howard committed Australia to participate in the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi, Japan in recognition of the importance of the Australia–Japan relationship. The Government committed a budget of \$35 million. A significant number of corporate sponsors and state government partners contributed approximately \$4.5 million in sponsorship for the Australian Pavilion.

The Aichi World Expo site is located in Nagoya, the capital of Aichi Prefecture. The theme of the Expo, which commenced on 25 March and will run until 25 September 2005, is 'Nature's Wisdom'. A record 121 countries and four international organisations are participating. Projected attendance is 15 million over six months.

#### *The Australian Pavilion*

The department has project-managed Australia's participation at the World Expo. Our key objective has been to project a contemporary image of Australia as culturally diverse and harmonious, and technologically sophisticated with a dynamic forward-looking economy.

The Government awarded the contract to design the Australian Pavilion to Melbourne-based company Think!OTS. The pavilion, both in design and function, reflects the theme of the Expo from an Australian perspective and showcases Australia's unique lifestyle and cultural diversity. The pavilion's facade is an artwork on a 'canvas' of stainless steel. Incorporating some of Australia's best known constellations—such as the Southern Cross and the Seven Sisters—it aims to bring the southern sky to the northern hemisphere. The pavilion's storyline is consistent with the 'Nature's Wisdom' theme. Using Australian images and themes, the storyline provides visitors with an understanding that through the lessons of the past and using modern-day technology, we will better provide for a sustainable future—environmentally, economically and socially.



*Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary of Denmark visit the Australian Pavilion at the World Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan in June 2005. They are seen here with the pavilion 'platypus'. Photo: José Manuel Ramirez*

Visitors are guided by Japanese-speaking Australians, underscoring this generation's close links with Japan and the future friendship between our two peoples. The Australian Pavilion has a specially-designed business facility for business and community functions.

#### *Business program*

The Aichi World Expo has provided a unique opportunity to showcase Australia as a leading business, tourism and education destination throughout Japan and the Asia-Pacific. The Australian Pavilion is hosting highly targeted business seminars and networking meetings for Australian and Japanese business representatives, in support of the promotion of tourism and education services. Mr Ian Grigg AM, Australian Business Envoy to Aichi World Expo, is responsible for coordinating the business program. The program features one priority sector for each month of the Aichi World Expo, covering: automotive; agribusiness; information and communications technology; environmental technology; biotechnology; natural resources and energy; and health and ageing. Austrade has played a major role in organising business missions, with assistance from state government agencies.

#### *Arts and entertainment program*

The Australian Pavilion's arts and entertainment program portrays an inventive, youthful and contemporary Australia. It merges traditional cultures with modern technology. Australia has a permanent troupe of six performers at the Expo plus more than 200 visiting performers, including leading Australian artists, such as jazz musician James Morrison, pianist Simon Tedeschi, guitarist Slava Grigoryan, Bangarra Dance Theatre and aerial performance artists Strange Fruit.

### 3.1.3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND CLEARANCE

#### Freedom of information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* extends to the Australian community the right to obtain access to information held by the Australian Government. Access is limited only by exemptions protecting essential public interests and the business and private affairs of people about whom departments and statutory authorities may hold information.

The department processed 87 requests from the public during the review period, an increase of 11 per cent over the previous year. Around one-third of these applications were complex requests for a substantial volume of information on sensitive topics. The limited number of applications not completed within the statutory deadline generally reflected the volume or complexity of the information requested. In these cases we kept applicants advised of progress.

The department strengthened its capacity to meet obligations under the Act by providing training to all officers at the director and senior executive level on their responsibilities under the Act. The department was proactive in managing FOI applications, liaising closely with applicants in an effort to better meet their requests for information. Where appropriate, senior departmental staff briefed applicants outside the formal FOI process, achieving an improved service from the applicants' perspective. A significant outcome of the department's handling of FOI applications was that no appeals were made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and there were only seven applications for internal review. Only one complaint was made to the Commonwealth Ombudsman about the department's handling of an application. After the department explained its position to the Commonwealth Ombudsman, further enquiries ceased.

The department also met its obligations under Sections 8 and 9 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. The department's Section 8 statement is at Appendix 5.

TABLE 13. REQUESTS PROCESSED UNDER THE *FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982*

	2004–05	2003–04	2002–03
<b>Requests for information</b>			
Access granted in full	22	13	8
Access granted in part	21	27	19
Access refused	26	22	20
Requests transferred or withdrawn	18	16	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Requests subject to review or legal appeal</b>			
Subject to internal review (s.54)	7	9	5
Subject to AAT appeal (s.55)	0	3	1
Ombudsman	1	1	3

### Freedom of information requests

Of the 87 FOI requests processed, 79 were not subject to review or appeal.

### *Privacy Act 1988*

No complaints were received in the department under the *Privacy Act 1988* during the reporting period.

### Historical publications and information

The department continued to research and prepare publications on Australia's foreign and trade policy history. These publications are an important resource for scholars and also help to explain the department's functions and activities to the public.

In September 2004, the department launched a new historical monograph series, *Australia in the world: The Foreign Affairs and Trade files*. The first publication in this series was *Australia and the origins of the Pacific Islands Forum*, published to commemorate the 35th meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in Apia. In November 2004, the department published the proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Editors of Diplomatic Documents, a conference we hosted in 2003 in Canberra.

Showing the links between historical accounts of foreign policy and today's foreign policy priorities, Mr Downer launched *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the Formation of Malaysia, 1961–1966* at the Australia–Malaysia Free Trade Agreement Conference in Melbourne in March 2005. The publication was also

launched in Malaysia, an event which underscored the real and sustained contributions Australia made to Malaysia in its formative years. The Prime Minister, Mr Howard presented a copy of the volume to the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Abdullah Badawi during the latter's visit to Australia.

Mr Downer also launched *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and the Colombo Plan, 1949–1957*. This book documents the role played by the Australian Government in conceiving and implementing the British Commonwealth (and later international) plan to provide economic and technical assistance to developing countries in South and South-East Asia.

We continued research towards production of other publications, including *Australia and the Independence of Papua New Guinea*, *Australia and the Cairns Group*, and *Australia and Japan*.

### Historical research and access

Departmental records more than 30 years old are available for public access under the *Archives Act 1983*. Before public access the National Archives of Australia refers highly-classified records back to the department for expert assessment regarding sensitivities relating to intelligence, security, defence or international relations.

Table 14 outlines requests assessed by the department under the Archives Act. We received 505 files from the National Archives to be assessed for public access. Including outstanding file requests from 2003–04, 572 files were completed, with 271 containing at least one exemption on national security or international relations grounds. We referred 34 files to other agencies (ASIO and the Department of Defence) and 14 requests to foreign governments (United Kingdom, United States, Canada and New Zealand) for clearance. We completed 19 requests for clearance from foreign governments (United Kingdom and United States) and 28 requests from other agencies. There were two requests for internal review and no appeals against our decisions to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. We granted three applications for special or privileged access to records not available to the public.

The department successfully reduced the backlog of files that had been received from the National Archives for access examination and also completed other access review work equivalent to 80 files (45 000 folios).

TABLE 14. REQUESTS ASSESSED UNDER THE ARCHIVES ACT 1983

	2004–05	2003–04	2002–03
Files received	505	464	461
Total files assessed	574	375	546
Files completed	572	299	490
Number of folios assessed	103 470	81 643	107 591
Open access	301	77	198
Wholly or partly exempt	271	222	275
Subject to review	2	0	1
Subject to appeal	0	0	0

### Corporate records

The department continued to undertake a range of activities designed to comply with the recommendations from the ANAO Report of 2003 on Recordkeeping in Large Commonwealth Agencies.

Key results included the development and endorsement by the department's Senior Executive of the Strategic Plan for Recordkeeping 2004–07 and a new Recordkeeping Policy for the department. We established a panel of service providers, the Records and Archival Services Panel 2004–07, with 17 companies offering a range of training, records management, archival and information systems consultancy services. Training programs were reviewed and improved and a scoping study was conducted looking at potential solutions for the implementation of an Electronic Document and Records Management System. By December 2004, the department had rolled out the TRIM records management software system to all overseas posts. We completed ten sentencing projects in Canberra and at overseas posts.

## Output 3.1 Quality and quantity information

### Quality indicators

- Satisfaction, particularly of ministers, with the provision and impact of public diplomacy and information activities in Australia and the degree to which a positive image of Australia is projected internationally and Australia's profile raised
- Timeliness and relevance of cultural and media activities and publications
- Number of departmentally processed Freedom of Information and Archives requests not subject to requests for review and appeal

### Quantity indicators

- Number of Australian performing groups, artists, exhibitors and other cultural visitors supported
- Number of public briefings given by departmental staff in Australia and overseas
- Number of other public diplomacy/cultural activities organised
- Number of media-related inquiries handled by the media liaison section
- Number of visits organised under the International Media and Special Visits Programs and the Cultural Awards Scheme
- Number of publications produced and number of copies distributed
- Number of statistical services provided to external clients
- Number of treaties maintained on, and added to, the international treaties database
- Number of Freedom of Information requests processed
- Number of records assessed for international relations sensitivities before release under the *Archives Act 1983* and number of completed requests for archival information

## Satisfaction with public diplomacy

Portfolio and other ministers commented favourably on the department's efforts to promote Australia's image abroad and to enhance understanding of, and support for, the national foreign and trade policy agenda in Australia.

Specifically, Mr Downer and Mr Vaile paid tribute to our role in projecting accurate and positive messages to overseas and domestic stakeholders about trade liberalisation initiatives, including free trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, ASEAN and New Zealand and continuing work on the AUSFTA, and World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. Industry groups (agriculture, manufacturing, services and resources) and state governments expressed appreciation for the department's trade outreach programs, and complimented our web-based and other published resources, print runs of which were fully subscribed.

Senior government officials and senior executives of Australian companies were pleased with our successful promotion of a positive image of Australia internationally through the Aichi World Expo. The department received written letters of appreciation from many senior visitors to the Australian Pavilion.

The department's public advocacy programs in consular crises (such as the Indian Ocean tsunami) and high-profile consular cases (for example, the Douglas Wood hostage situation in Iraq) were praised by ministers and families of those affected. The public and travel industry reaction to our public information programs in support of the introduction of the new *Australian Passports Act 2005*—including the positioning of posters at international airports and elsewhere—has been generally positive although the programs have been in place a relatively short time.

Mr Downer, Senator Patterson and senior staff of the Office of the Status of Women commended the department on its production of an historical display featuring Australian women in international diplomacy, which was launched both in Canberra and New York and has since toured other international venues, promoting the diverse roles played by Australian women in achieving Australia's foreign and trade policy goals.

We established websites to provide information on, and promote national interests in, key events (including our consular response to the tsunami). Positive feedback from users on other specific websites (such as *smartraveller* and sites on Australia's trade policies) underscored the department's successful use of new technologies to support its broad public information agenda.

A well-targeted International Media Visits program produced extensive and constructive media reporting on key foreign and trade policy initiatives such as FTAs, our relations with ASEAN countries and Australia's policies in the South Pacific. Feedback from participants, our overseas posts and external clients was uniformly positive. Senior media representatives from China, ASEAN, the Middle East and the Pacific commented favourably on the program. A member of the ASEAN media group visit commented that

their visit 'met our objectives of communicating the extent of Australia's economic, trade and investment linkages in the region and underlining the strength of ties between Australia and ASEAN'.

The company NWS Australia LNG praised the visit of three Chinese media representatives organised by the department as 'very important for the Sino-Australia relationship'.

A targeted program of group and individual briefings conducted by senior officials with Australian media representatives resulted in broad and better informed coverage of key portfolio interests, including FTAs, biometric passports, international security issues (including Australia's terrorism White Paper), WTO negotiations, East Timor maritime boundary and resource issues negotiations and Australia's uranium export policy.

The Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Corporation commended the department on its assistance for the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay, saying we 'provided tremendous support to the team with their advice here in Australia and on the ground in the destinations that the Relay has visited.'

The department's Cultural Awards Scheme (CAS) visit program attracted appreciative comments from international visitors and led quickly to concrete outcomes, such as programming of Australian artists into international events. CAS clearly strengthened our links with overseas arts industries. Some significant outcomes from CAS visits included:

- exhibitions by two Australian visual artists (Shaun Gladwell and Craig Walsh) to be held at the Yokohama Triennale 2005 at the invitation of CAS visitor, Taro Amano, Curator at the Yokohama Museum of Modern Art
- the permanent display of Australian flora at Taiwan's National Museum of Natural Science following the visit of its Director, Dr Li Chia-wei
- ongoing Radio New Zealand promotion of Australian cultural programs following the visit of an RNZ journalist.

## Publications

The department produced a range of publications designed to provide general information on Australia, plus more specialised publications on Australia's foreign and trade policy and the economic and political climate of other countries. Publications are available in hard copy, online, on CD or downloadable PDF files.

Economic publications attracted strong media coverage. *Solomon Islands: Rebuilding an island economy* was featured in a full-page article in the *Australian Financial Review* and in an editorial in *Solomon Star*. It also was reported widely on radio in Solomon Islands and on ABC Radio Australia News. *Papua New Guinea: The road ahead* was covered in most of the major Australian and both Papua New Guinean dailies.

*Malaysia: An economy transformed* attracted strong, positive media coverage in both Australia and Malaysia (*New Straits Times* and *The Edge Malaysia*). The publication was distributed to all participants and used extensively in a paper presented at the opening session of the Australia–Malaysia Free Trade Agreement Conference organised by the Australian APEC Studies Centre.

The key findings of the report *Australia and the United States: Trade and the multinationals in a new era* were included in a number of industry association newsletters and web page entries. The report was included in Austrade's *Australian export update*, the Industry Capability Network website and the Government's FTA website ([www.fta.gov.au](http://www.fta.gov.au)).

Following a departmental review of our compilation of trade statistics, we introduced a new *Trade Topics Quarterly* and reduced from 10 to 7 the annual set of statistical publications. We produced three new PDF publications on Australia's trade statistics with East Asia, the European Union and the Americas.

Publications on *Australia—Trading with the World* were well received. Continuing demand for the popular *Australia in brief* saw a new edition produced and dispatched to all posts for international distribution. VIP guests visiting the Australian Pavilion at the Aichi Expo welcomed our distribution of a bilingual text *Australia–Japan Connections*, which addressed cultural, trade and education links, as a high quality memento of their visits.

The department's latest publications of historical documents on Australian foreign policy, *Australia and the Formation of Malaysia 1961–1966* and *Australia and the Colombo Plan*, were positively received in Australia and the region. Prime Minister Howard presented a copy of the Malaysian volume to the Malaysian Prime Minister who commented favourably. The Malaysian media and senior Malaysian officials welcomed the publication's launch. The Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore said it provided a 'useful third-party account of many significant events in the early years of Singapore's nationhood and shared history with Malaysia'. In his launch of the Colombo Plan volume, Mr Downer noted the historical dimensions of Australia–Asia people-to-people contacts and educational engagement.

### Freedom of information requests

Of the 87 freedom of information requests processed, 79 were not subject to review and appeal. No complaints were received in the department under the *Privacy Act 1988* during the reporting period.

## Quantity information for output 3.1

Indicators	2004-05	2003-04
Number of Australian performing groups, artists, exhibitors and other cultural visitors supported	1 439	1 634
Number of public briefings given by departmental staff in Australia and overseas	2 434	1 985
Number of other public diplomacy/cultural activities organised	1 641	1 463
Number of media-related inquiries handled by the media liaison section	8 700	6 700
Number of visits organised under:		
International Media Program	33	41
Special Visits Program	32	32
Cultural Awards Scheme	15	15
Number of publications produced and number of copies distributed <sup>1</sup>	367	473
Number of statistical services provided to external clients	8 812	8 587
Number of treaties maintained on, and added to, the international treaties database <sup>2</sup>	3 073	2 677
Number of Freedom of Information requests processed	87	68
Number of records assessed for international relations sensitivities before release under the <i>Archives Act 1983</i> and number of completed requests for archival information	1 146	674

1 The department continues to distribute a substantial number of publications in hard copy form. However, given our increasing use of the website to disseminate publications—including to our overseas posts—the quantity of hard copy documents distributed has become a less meaningful indicator.

2 For information on treaties, see the Australian Treaties Database at [www.info.dfat.gov.au/treaties](http://www.info.dfat.gov.au/treaties).

## Administered items for Outcome 3

### *Grants*

#### Quality indicator

- Grants administered in accordance with Government guidelines on the administration of the Discretionary Grants Program

#### Quantity indicator

- Number of grants

Grants were administered in accordance with Government guidelines on the administration of the Discretionary Grants Program. See Appendix 11 for a list of discretionary grant programs administered by the department.

#### Quantity information

Nine grants were administered in 2004–05.

## ***ABC Asia Pacific (ABCAP) television service***

### **Quality indicator**

- ABCAP television service to meet its contractual obligations with the department in regard to the quality, coverage and management of the new television service

### **Quantity indicator**

- ABCAP's performance measured by the tests and assessments prescribed in the DFAT-ABCAP contract

Key indicators were met.

### **Quantity information**

ABCAP has secured distribution on more than 150 re-broadcast platforms in 38 countries. Independent surveys confirm that ABCAP ranks in the top 25 broadcast channels and consistently ranks ahead of channels such as Channel News Asia, CNBC, Fox News, Bloomberg and Hallmark.

## *Australian participation in the 2005 World Expo—Aichi, Japan*

### Quality indicator

- Australia's participation at the Expo will provide an opportunity to further develop Australia–Japan relations across a range of areas, including economic, cultural, environment and people-to-people links

### Quantity indicator

- Performance is measured by a range of quantitative and qualitative indicators described in project documentation

As of 30 June 2005, the Australian pavilion had welcomed 1.28 million visitors since Aichi World Expo began on 25 March 2005. The Australian pavilion and associated activities attracted a total of 1060 media items in Japan and Australia, contributing to positive reporting on the Australia–Japan relationship. The Australian pavilion has been consistently voted in the top five national pavilions by Japanese publications.

More than 100 invitational events promoting tourism, business, education and other aspects of the relationship have been held at the pavilion, attracting over 5000 Japanese guests. More than 400 Australian cultural performances have been held on the stages of the Aichi World Expo site.

High-level visitors to the pavilion have included the Prime Minister, Mr Howard, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Downer, the Minister for Trade, Mr Vaile, the premiers of Queensland and Victoria, state government ministers, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Crown Prince of Japan, the Crown Prince and Princess of Denmark, senior executives from Toyota Australia, Woodside, Rio Tinto and Northwest Shelf LNG, the Governor of Aichi Prefecture and the Commissioner-General of the Bureau International des Exposition. The Australian pavilion has received letters of appreciation from many senior visitors, outlining their positive experience.



*Departmental staff visit the site of the new chancery in Baghdad in February 2005.  
Left to right: Glenn Ashe (Senior Administrative Officer, Baghdad); Howard Brown (Ambassador); Nick Warner (Deputy Secretary); Kevin Nixon (Assistant Secretary, Overseas Property Office) and John Richardson (Assistant Secretary, Diplomatic Security Branch).*

*Repairs to the Australian embassy Jakarta and additional security works under construction following the terrorist bombing in September 2004.*

