What’s all this about the WHO?

Background

Who is the WHO?

What treaties?

What do the treaties do?

Concerns

Our parliaments and parliamentarians don’t have much say

How is it in the national interest to commit to always follow the WHO?

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When will this be referred to JSCOT?

WHO

- Founded 1948
- 194 Member States

WHO – then and now

Then

- Specific diseases
- Member states funded
- Advisory body

Now

- Broadest possible conception of health
- 80% + funding from non-govt donors with strings attached
- Directing and coordinating body

Federal government in strong support of WHO

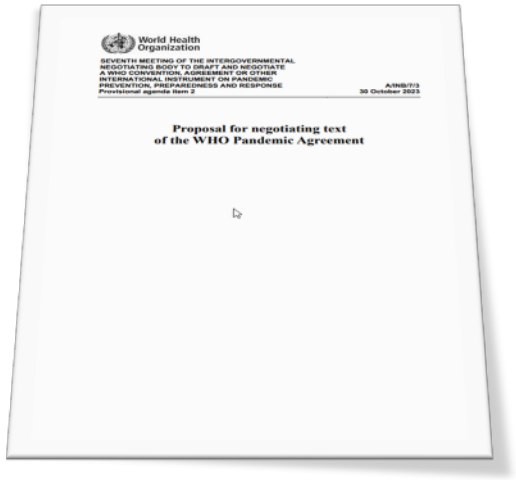
Home › Senator the Hon Penny Wong › Supporting global efforts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to pandemics

Supporting global efforts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to pandemics

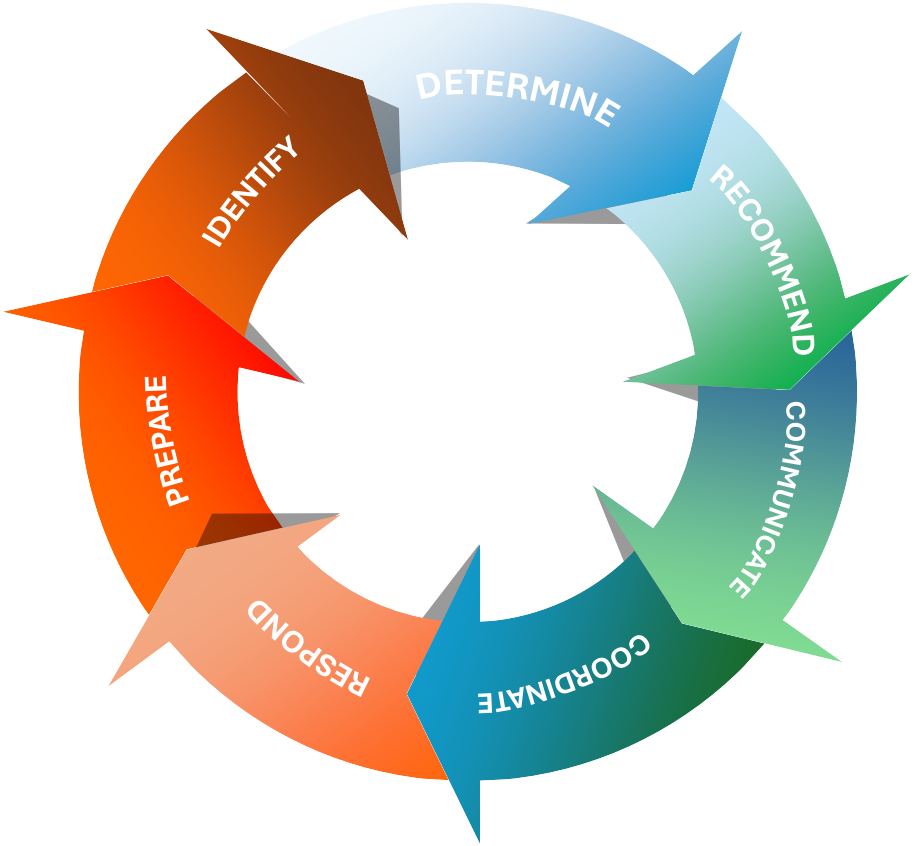
Media release
20 September 2023

"…We need a strong global health system to help keep Australia, our region, and the world safe. This means ***a strong, capable WHO with the authority to respond quickly and decisively*** *to complex health emergencies…."*

Pandemic agreement and IHR – separate but related



The World Health Organisation, International Health Regulations, and the proposed Pandemic Treaty - how it works



Libby Klein Reclaim Ethical Medicine 5 June 2024

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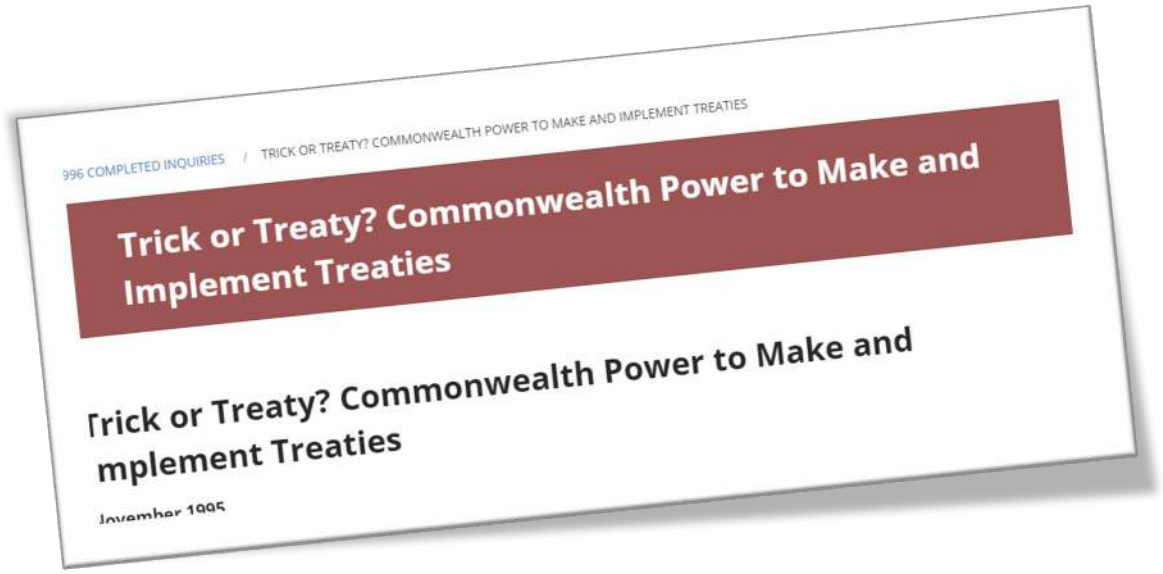
Parliament’s role is limited

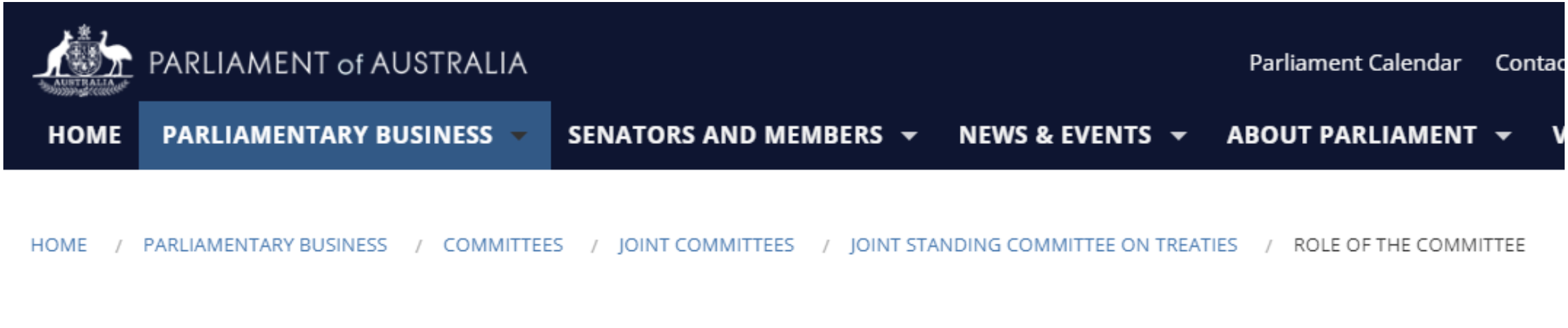
The executive government makes the decision

"The Constitution deals with two different powers in relation to treaties. First, there is the power to enter into treaties, which is an **executive** power. Secondly, there is the power to implement treaties, which is a legislative power."

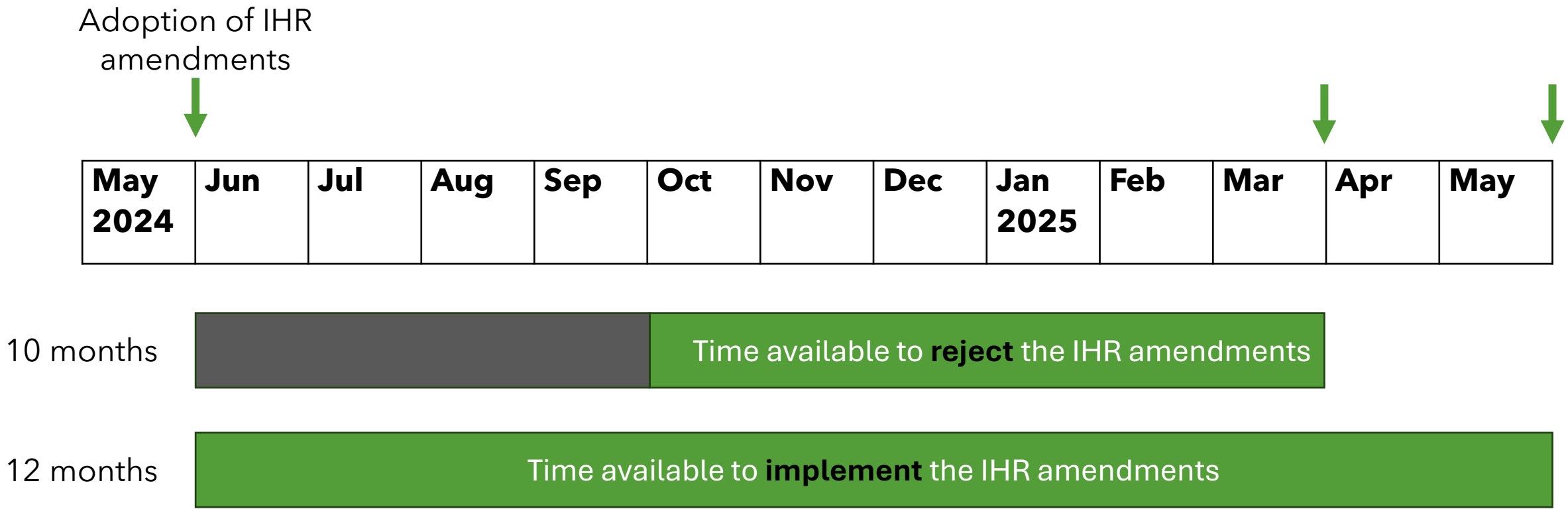


https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and_Constitutional_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/pre1996/treaty/report/index

We do have a parliamentary committee (JSCOT) to examine treaties – but the government hasn't activated that process yet



We’re running out of time



Misinformation /Disinformation bill implements changes necessary for compliance with IHR

Biosecurity Act may not need further amendment

477 Health Minister may determine emergency requirements during human biosecurity emergency period

(1) During a human biosecurity emergency period, the Health Minister may determine any requirement that he or she is satisfied is necessary:

(a) to prevent or control:

(i) the entry of the declaration listed human disease into Australian territory or a part of Australian territory; or

(ii) the emergence, establishment or spread of the declaration listed human disease in Australian territory or a part of Australian territory; or

(b) to prevent or control the spread of the declaration listed human disease to another country; or

(c) if a recommendation has been made to the Health Minister by the World Health Organization under Part III of the International Health Regulations in relation to the declaration listed human disease—to give effect to the recommendation.

Broad emergency powers at State level

Division 3—Emergency powers

198 Declaration of a state of emergency

(1) The Minister may, on the advice of the Chief Health Officer and after consultation with the Minister and the Emergency Management Commissioner under the **Emergency Management Act 2013**, declare a state of emergency arising out of any circumstances causing a serious risk to public health.

Broad emergency powers at State level

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
No. 46 of 2008
Part 10—Protection and enforcement provisions

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200 Emergency powers

(1) The emergency powers are—

(a) subject to this section, detain any person or group of persons in the emergency area for the period reasonably necessary to eliminate or reduce a serious risk to public health;

(b) restrict the movement of any person or group of persons within the emergency area;

(c) prevent any person or group of persons from entering the emergency area;

(d) give any other direction that the authorised officer considers is reasonably necessary to protect public health.

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Questions to ask

1. How is it in the national interest to commit to always following the WHO's public health recommendations?
2. What legislative changes will be required at the Federal and State/Territory levels, for Australia to implement the IHR amendments?
3. When will the IHR amendments be referred to JSCOT, when will JSCOT issue its final report, and why the delay in referring to JSCOT?
4. How much will this all cost the Australian taxpayer?

Resources

- Aligned Council of Australia
- Stand Up Now Australia
- Australia Exits the WHO
- Reclaim Ethical Medicine
- James Roguski