



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL
HON ROBERT MCCLELLAND**



**MINISTER FOR JUSTICE
HON SIMON POWER**

MEDIA RELEASE

18 March 2009

PROGRESS ON TRANS-TASMAN LEGAL REFORMS

Robert McClelland, Australian Attorney-General, and Simon Power, New Zealand Minister for Justice, today met in Canberra to progress a range of measures aimed at harmonising trans-Tasman legal arrangements.

Ministers discussed progress on the implementation of the Trans-Tasman Court Proceedings and Regulatory Enforcement Treaty, signed in July 2008.

The Treaty includes a number of innovative measures, such as expanding the range of court judgments that can be enforced across the Tasman, and simplifying the related processes.

“I’m pleased that Australian legislation to implement the agreement will be introduced into Parliament this year. The priority we have attached to this legislation demonstrates the Rudd Government’s commitment to making it easier and more cost effective for Australian and New Zealand businesses and individuals to resolve disputes,” said Mr McClelland.

“Like Australia, the New Zealand Government also plans to introduce legislation this year to ensure the implementation of this important agreement is achieved quickly,” said Mr Power.

The Attorney-General also updated the Minister on the *Law and Justice (Cross Border and other Amendments) Bill 2009*, which the Government intends to introduce into the Australian Parliament this week.

The Bill will expand the Trans-Tasman subpoena scheme to family proceedings, meaning that family proceedings will be included in the range of proceedings covered by the cooperative scheme between Australia and New Zealand for the service of subpoenas.

Ministers also discussed work to enhance trans-Tasman cross-border insolvency arrangements, which is being led by the Australian Minister for Superannuation and Corporate Governance, Nick Sherry. Both countries have now passed legislation implementing the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law’s Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency, and will shortly be commencing an examination into the streamlining of trans-Tasman arrangements under the Model Law.

“The examination of trans-Tasman insolvency regimes will complement other personal insolvency reforms the Rudd Government is progressing in 2009 which aim to ensure Australia's bankruptcy regime remains modern and well-equipped to address the challenges of the modern financial situation,” said Mr McClelland.

Ministers will meet again next month at the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General meeting in Canberra, of which New Zealand is a full member.

Media Contact:	Adam Siddique (McClelland)	+61 407 473 630
	Katherine Seymour (Power)	+64 4 817 6853