

MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER FOR RESOURCES: SEPT 1988

Joint Statement by  
the Minister for Resources, Senator Peter Cook, and  
the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans

AUSTRALIA MONITORS NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

The Australian Seismological Centre (ASC) today released its first report on nuclear explosions monitored by Australia.

The first report provides information on all presumed underground nuclear explosions detected by the ASC since its establishment by the Government in September 1986. Future editions of the report will be published quarterly and will contain information on all nuclear explosions monitored during that quarter.

During the period January to June 1988, the ASC's report records that 17 underground nuclear explosions were conducted, compared with a total of 23 during the same period in 1987. 64 explosions were detonated during the first 18 months of the ASC's operation.

In a joint statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Gareth Evans, and the Minister for Resources, Senator Peter Cook, said the report reflected the substantial contribution Australia was making to work on the seismological monitoring of underground nuclear tests and to the establishment of a global seismological network. The network would be a basic means of verifying compliance with a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

The two Ministers said that there was still a lot to do to establish the global network and build confidence in its reliability and sensitivity.

"Australia is committed to the objective of a comprehensive test ban and of a global seismological network to back this up. Australia expects to be one of several international data centres in the global network" the Ministers said.

Senator Evans and Senator Cook said that the dissemination of information such as that contained in the ASC's report would also enhance international efforts to detect and analyse nuclear tests. Australia would be providing the report to the United Nations Secretary-General in accordance with an Australian resolution first tabled at the United Nations in 1986, calling for more information to be made available on nuclear testing to facilitate the development of monitoring capabilities.