

Preventing CW and BW Proliferation:

The Australia Group

Thailand Consortium: Trade Control on Weapons of Mass
Destruction related Items 2017

Bangkok, 17-19 July 2017

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What is the Australia Group?

- The Australia Group (AG) is an informal forum of 42 participants, which through the harmonisation of export controls is seeking to ensure their exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons.
- Help States meet their international obligations:
 - Chemical Weapons Convention;
 - Biological Weapons Convention; and
 - United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.



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Australia Group Origins



- In 1984 the world discovered Iraq had produced and used chemical weapons.
- Australia Group was created in 1985 to stop legitimate trade being diverted to chemical weapons production.
- In the early 1990s UN investigations discovered that Iraq had a biological weapons program.
- Consequently, export controls were expanded to include biological weapons.



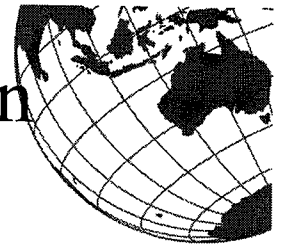
Regrettably Chemical Weapons use is still a reality



- Examples:
 - Syria
 - Da'esh



Australia Group statement on the 20th anniversary of the CWC entry into force



- Australia Group participants share the deep concerns of the international community at the re-emergence of the use of CW, a dangerous and inhumane weapon of mass destruction
- The Group issued a consensus based statement at the Australia Group June 2017 Plenary
- Important to uphold the norms enshrined in the CWC, and support the work of the OPCW

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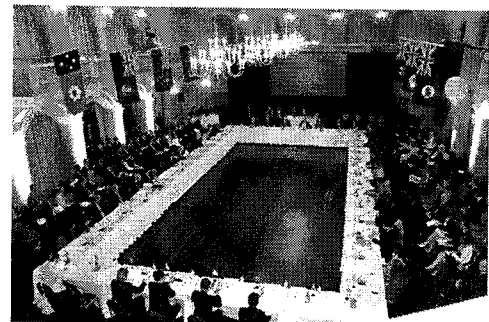
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Australia Group Operations



- Regular meetings
 - Information Exchange
 - Implementation Exchange
 - Enforcement Exchange
 - New and Emerging Technologies Technical Experts Meeting
 - Plenary
- Consensus based



AG Plenary, Perth June 2015

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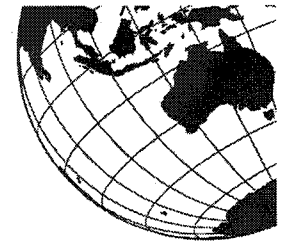
Australia Group Controls



- Guidelines
- Control Lists and Dual-use Items Lists
 - Chemical weapons precursors;
 - Human and Animal pathogens and toxins;
 - Plant pathogens;
 - Dual-use chemical manufacturing equipment and related technology; and
 - Dual-use biological equipment and related technology.



Promote Export Controls



- The Australia Group encourages all countries to implement measures similar to AG controls to limit the spread of CBW.



Harmonising Controls and Enforcement



- Each AG Country has national controls:
 - Legislation (includes “catch-all”);
 - Implementation (e.g. licences); and
 - Enforcement (e.g. customs inspections).



Australia Group Engagement



- Engagement with:
 - non-members countries
 - industry
 - academia
 - civil society
- Highlighting the threat of state and non-state actors acquiring chemical/biological weapons.

www.australiagroup.net

Australia Group
Common Control List Handbook
Volume 1: Weapons-Related Common Control Lists

Statement by the Chair of the 2015 Australia Group Plenary

5 June 2015

The 41 Member Countries of the Australia Group (AG) and the European Union marked the Group's 30th anniversary at the Plenary meeting in Perth this week. The Australia Group was formed after the use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq War. Its work aims to counter the spread of technologies and materials used for chemical and biological weapons (CBW) through coordinated export controls, information sharing and outreach.

During the meeting, Members noted that export controls facilitated trade by preventing the diversion of legitimate trade towards weapons of mass destruction. Members emphasised that importers of proliferation-sensitive materials and technology also need to implement export controls, in order to provide confidence to suppliers that such materials and technology would not be re-exported for the benefit of proliferators. Export controls also help countries implement UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

Among the measures Australia Group member countries agreed to take to strengthen CBW non-proliferation were:

- Intensifying the Australia Group focus on emerging technologies that can be used for chemical and biological weapons.
- Expanding outreach to non-members as well as industry and academia to highlight the threat posed by state and non-state actors seeking to acquire the know-how to develop chemical and biological weapons.

Consideration was given to the interest in membership from specific countries and to the group's approach to future membership questions.



Denials



- The Australia Group aims to ensure export controls do not hinder legitimate trade and to legitimise trade in sensitive items.
- There are very few Australia Group export denials.
- Export denials:
 - national decision,
 - based on the AG Guidelines and Control Lists,
 - information shared within AG,
 - “no-undercut” policy.



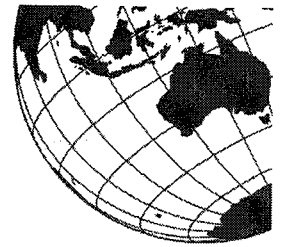
Challenges



- Technological developments
 - Emerging biotechnology
- Investigations
- Methods of trade (e.g. internet, eBay, the dark web)
- Intangible transfers of technology (e.g. electronic transfer of knowledge)
- Terrorism
- The use of CW in Syria and Iraq



Australia Group Intersessional 2017



- An AG Intersessional was held in Buenos Aires in February 2017 and the key events were:
 - New and Evolving Technologies Technical Experts Meeting.
 - Implementation Meeting.
 - Australia Group Dialogue including outreach to a number of Latin American countries.



Australia Group Plenary 2017



- The 2017 Plenary decided to focus on:
 - emerging technologies; science and potential exploitation of cyber space;
 - preventing proliferation of CW and BW goods, technologies and information to non-state actors;
 - chemical and biological terrorism;
 - intangible technology transfers; proliferation financing; procurement, transshipment and broader proliferation networks; and
 - expand outreach to non-AG countries, industry and academia, including AG Dialogues, to encourage all states to implement robust export controls.



The Australia Group in Asia



- Many countries in the region already implement or are looking to implement AG or AG-type controls.
- Exporting countries look positively on recipient states that have export control arrangements.
- High-technology companies are more likely to invest in states that have robust export control arrangements.
- The AG has undertaken outreach to a number of Asian countries.



Australia Group Adherents



- The Australia Group Chair and Secretariat can assist with:
 - Providing information about the Australia Group.
 - Facilitating specific requests for practical technical assistance.
 - Facilitating contacts with export control experts in Australia Group countries.
- Not legally binding, requires no acceptance decision by the AG membership, just a letter of solidarity with the AG Guidelines and Control Lists and any subsequent changes to them



Australia Group contact



- Australia Group Secretariat
 - through any Australian Embassy
 - Or jane.lambert@dfat.gov.au
- Australia Group website
 - www.australiagroup.net
 - in English, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian and Spanish



