

AUSTRALIAN WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies

The first meeting of the Australian Water Resources Council is expected to be held early in the New Year.

As I announced in the Policy Speech last November, the Government considers that machinery should be set up to ensure that the highest level of basic information on Australian water resources is secured and made available. Discussions have since taken place between Commonwealth and State Ministers directly concerned with water resources and all Governments have now agreed to the formation of a Council for this purpose.

This decision is to be welcomed. Water is a vital factor in development and we need to know a great deal more in detail about our water resources. The Council should provide the means for this to be done in a comprehensive and systematic way. While the Council cannot be expected to achieve spectacular or quick results in such a field, the results of its work should be invaluable.

The Council will comprise the Minister for National Development as Chairman, the Minister for Territories, and the Minister-in-charge of water supplies from each State. Provision has been made for Ministers responsible for closely related activities to be co-opted when problems of particular concern to them are under discussion. The Council will be assisted by a Standing Committee of Commonwealth and State officers.

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CANBERRA,

28th November, 1962.