

FOR PRESS:

PM No. 29/1971

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. William McMahon

His Excellency the Governor-General in Council has today established two new Departments of State and abolished two existing Departments.

The two new Departments are :-

- .. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- .. The Department of the Vice-President of the Executive Council.

The Prime Minister's Department and the Department of the Cabinet Office have been abolished.

The changes in departmental structure are designed to support the operation of the Cabinet system of government. As I have already said, I propose to develop this system to its full extent as to provide scope for the expression of its collective wisdom, and to use to the fullest extent the expert knowledge and experience within individual portfolios.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will be central to this process.

It will be the task of the Department to provide the Secretary to Cabinet and to the Committees of Cabinet, and the associated Secretariat machinery, and to provide briefing to the Prime Minister in relation to matters involving him as Chairman of Cabinet and Head of Government. The Department will be responsible also for exchanging information with and maintaining close relations with Ministers and Departments as part of the co-ordinating process.

Sir John Bunting, the present Secretary to Cabinet, has been appointed Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. He will continue as Secretary to Cabinet.

The new Department of the Vice-President of the Executive Council will undertake a number of functions previously located in the Prime Minister's Department and in the Treasury. It will be responsible for a wide range of matters. A list of functions already approved is attached and the allocation to the Department of certain other functions is to be examined.

The change will not involve the Executive Council itself, which is separate from and completely independent of the new Department.

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The arrangements which have now been made will require re-allotment of staff. Sir John Bunting will be taking up this matter with the Chairman of the Public Service Board.

I have been in touch with Sir Lenox Hewitt and have placed before him certain alternatives for his consideration.

I want to pay high tribute to him for his service as Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department. He will, of course, retain his status as a senior level Permanent Head.

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CANBERRA  
12 March 1971

## ATTACHMENT

1. National Library.
  2. Archives.
  3. Australian Government Publishing Service including the Government Printing Office.
  4. Council of Aboriginal Affairs.
  5. Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
  6. Office of the Environment.
  7. Film and Television Training School.
  8. World Expositions.
  9. Commonwealth Literary Fund.
  10. Art Advisory Board.
  11. National Gallery.
  12. Historic Memorials Committee.
  13. Council of Performing Arts.
  14. Assistance to Performers Advisory Board.
  15. Grants to National Organisations.
  16. National Radiation Advisory Committee.
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