



**DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**

NO

M/35

DATE

20 February 1973

GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW AUSTRALIAN HIGH
COMMISSION, LONDON

The Government is to undertake a comprehensive review of the Australian High Commission in London.

This was announced today by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Willesee, who said that the review would follow the recent transfer of the administration of the High Commission to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Senator Willesee said that the review would be conducted by Mr J.E. Collings, a Commissioner of the Public Service Board since 1960.

Mr Collings would examine functions, methods, procedures, organisation and staffing, with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the High Commission's operation.

The Australian High Commission in London is by far the biggest of Australia's overseas missions, and includes both public service and defence forces representatives.

.../2

Current staff is about 1,100, of whom about 900 are locally-engaged and 350 are engaged on immigration matters. The last full-scale review was conducted in 1959/60.

Responsibility for administering the High Commission was transferred to the Minister for Foreign Affairs from the Prime Minister on 1 November, 1972.

Senator Willesee said that Mr Collings was widely experienced in public service organisation. He was particularly familiar with Australian operations overseas, starting from his service in the then Department of External Affairs in 1945/47.

During the review, Mr Collings will confer with Ministers and Heads of the Government Departments represented at the High Commission.

Mr Collings proposes to travel to London in April this year and during his absence Mr F.C. Nordeck, O.B.E., will act as Commissioner of the Public Service Board.

Mr Nordeck, a First Assistant Commissioner in the Office of the Public Service Board, is closely associated with the Board's major activities and has acted as Commissioner on many occasions since 1960.