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PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 86

6 May 1973

CO-OPERATION IN SPACE PROJECT

Australia will have access to special information obtained through America's proposed "Skylab" manned space laboratory.

Federal Cabinet today was told that access to the information would be provided under the Australian/U.S. agreement on scientific co-operation through the new Ministry of Science.

The channelling of the information through the Science Ministry will mark the start of an overall move of projects associated with the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration from the control of the Ministry of Supply to that of Australia's Ministry of Science.

A special meeting of Cabinet in Sydney was told that because of Australian co-operation in the "Skylab" venture, Australia would be able to make special requests to the "Skylab" team for photographs and reports on Australia. These would be valuable in planning mineral exploration, assessing the extent of pollution and discovering diseases in major forest projects.

The handover of the chief participatory role in America's post-Apollo space programme from Supply to the Department of Science will continue gradually in coming months.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.