



## PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 153

30 NOVEMBER 1973.

### MINISTERIAL AND DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES

I have recommended certain Ministerial changes to His Excellency the Governor-General and His Excellency today has :

- appointed the Honourable Les Johnson to be Minister for Housing and Construction, consequent upon the abolition of the Department of Housing and the renaming of the Department of Works as the Department of Housing and Construction.
- accepted the resignation of Senator the Honourable Don Willesee as Special Minister of State following rearrangement of the Ministerial workload consequent upon Senator Willesee's appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs.
- appointed the Honourable Lionel F. Bowen, Postmaster-General, to be also Special Minister of State. Mr. Bowen, in addition, will be Minister Assisting the Prime Minister.

His Excellency has also accepted the resignation of Senator Willesee as Vice-President of the Executive Council and has appointed in his place the Honourable F.E. Stewart, Minister for Tourism and Recreation, to be Vice-President of the Executive Council.

The following administrative changes were also approved today by the Executive Council :

- the Departments of Navy, Army and Air were abolished and their functions merged with those of the Department of Defence.

- . the Department of Civil Aviation was abolished and its functions merged with those of the Department of Transport.
- . the Department of Housing was abolished and its functions merged with the Department of Works, renamed the Department of Housing and Construction.
- . the Department of External Territories was abolished and its remaining functions distributed to other departments.

Details of these changes will be published in the Gazette today.

With the abolition of the Departments of Housing, Civil Aviation, Air, Army, Navy and External Territories, the associated Ministerial portfolios cease to exist. Mr. Barnard continues as Minister for Defence, Mr. Jones as Minister for Transport and Mr. Morrison as Minister for Science. Mr. Morrison will also be Minister Assisting the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Papua New Guinea matters.

By these changes the number of departments is reduced from 37 to 31. Other changes - the abolition of the Department of Customs and Excise and the Department of Supply - are still under consideration.

Associated with the departmental changes approved by the Executive Council today were formal decisions for the abolition of Public Service positions in departments being abolished. Staff will be transferred to corresponding positions created in the departments to which functions are being transferred.

Mr. A.S. Reiher will be Permanent Head of the Department of Housing and Construction. Mr. C.C. Halton will be Permanent Head of the Department of Transport.

Mr. Bruce White, formerly Permanent Head of the Department of the Army, will continue as Permanent Head Assisting the Secretary, Department of Defence.

Mr. F.J. Green, formerly Secretary, Department of Air, will be Special Deputy of the Permanent Head, Department of Defence (Navy Office) and Special Deputy of the Permanent Head, Department of Defence (Air Office).

Mr. J.B.R. Livermore, Acting Secretary, Department of the Army, will be Special Deputy of the Permanent Head, Department of Defence (Army Office).

As already announced, Mr. S. Landau, formerly Secretary, Department of the Navy, has been appointed Minister (Politico-Military Affairs) Australian Embassy, Washington.

It has also been announced that Mr. D.O. Hay, formerly Secretary, Department of External Territories, will be Defence Force Ombudsman.

It is intended that Mr. J.F. Nimmo, formerly Secretary, Department of Housing, be appointed a Member of the Grants Commission. It is also intended that Mr. Nimmo be appointed a Commissioner under the Royal Commissions Act to undertake an inquiry into the impact of freight rates on the Tasmanian economy.