

PRESS STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER

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NATIONAL ESTATE PROJECTS FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Australian Government has offered Western Australia \$330,000 this financial year for projects to preserve the National Estate.

The grants are being made to help a wide variety of projects put forward by the Western Australian Government on behalf of Government authorities, the National Trust and local government bodies.

In my policy speech in 1972 I stated that in relation to land, an over-riding objective of a Labor Government would be "to preserve and enhance the quality of the national estate". In May 1973 we established a Committee of Inquiry which will soon present its report.

Both the inquiry and the concept itself have been welcomed throughout Australia. There is clearly a rapidly growing concern over the pressures that threaten what is best and most valuable in our surroundings. Equally there is a growing sense of the value and beauty of our natural and cultural inheritance.

The Australian Government's introduction of the concept of the National Estate, and its assumption of responsibilities in preserving and enhancing it, represent a turning-point in our national sense of values and in our cultural maturity.

We have a great and varied inheritance to protect and care for. Australia is in many ways unique - in her wildlife and her many natural beauties. Further we are now beginning to recognise the value of the often excellent buildings and historic towns left us by early Australians.

All these things, and many more, comprise the National Estate, and to conserve and enhance them will increase our own sense of pride and responsibility as a nation and extend the respect of other peoples.

I want to pay special tribute to the help and co-operation that my Government has received from the Western Australian Government in developing the idea of the National Estate.

The Western Australian Government arranged for a State Policy Group to be established and this has provided a most useful contact point.

Actions taken by the State in this way show how the States and the Australian Government can work together in a joint effort to preserve our heritage.

In some cases the funds to be provided to Western Australia this year are by way of assistance towards large projects which have been planned and will be executed by the Western Australian Government.

A large sum is being provided to help with the acquisition of land for park purposes on the south-west coast. Many Perth people use this area for recreation. The Western Australian Government hopes to see a system of parks developed for the benefit of city dwellers.

\$40,000 is being made available, through the Environmental Protection Authority, for estuarine management studies and associated urgent measures in the Peel Inlet and Hardy Inlet areas.

Several historic towns form part of the man-made heritage of Western Australia. Help will be given to the town of York for development of its special characteristics, to Cossack in the north-west, and Greenough near Geraldton. Funds will be provided to the Esperance Bay Historical Society to establish a local historic museum.

Fremantle will receive special attention as it is one of the few towns in Australia that retain its historic character and is at the same time a thriving community.

The Australian Government has arranged, through the Cities Commission, to finance an action plan for the preservation of Fremantle. \$30,000 has been allocated for this project.

Funds will also be provided to the National Trust for help in restoration of a number of important projects planned by the Trust.
