



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 216

5 April 1974

INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE COMMISSION TO REPORT ON RURAL RESEARCH AND PROMOTION

The Prime Minister announced today that he had forwarded two references to the Industries Assistance Commission on the question of Australian Government assistance in financing rural research and the promotion of rural products.

Mr. Whitlam said that the references were in accordance with the statement made by Dr. Patterson as the Minister representing the Minister for Primary Industry, when introducing the Wool Industry Bill 1974 on 14 March 1974, to provide for financing wool research and promotion during the three years beginning with the year 1974/75. The Government has decided to ask the Commission to report on rural research and promotion generally before the announced three year wool promotion scheme expires in 1976/77. The Government's policy in relation to the continuation of wool research and promotion beyond June 1977 will be determined in the light of the report of the Commission.

Mr. Whitlam said that expenditure by the Government on rural promotion in 1973/74 will be about \$15.7 million on wool and about \$1.2 million on promotion overseas of meat, dairy products, apples and pears, canned fruit, dried vine fruits, eggs, wine and honey. Expenditure on wool research alone in 1973/74 was expected to be about \$6 million.

The Commission has been asked whether funds should continue to be provided by the Australian Government to finance, or assist in financing rural research and promotion of rural products (including processed products) and, if so:-

- (a) What should be the nature and extent of the assistance provided by the Australian Government, and
- (b) What criteria should be used in determining and apportioning such expenditure.

For the purposes of both inquiries, fisheries and fisheries products have been included within the scope of the references.