



PRIME MINISTER

15 May 1974

VIP AIRCRAFT

The Prime Minister, Mr E.G. Whitlam said tonight:

"Any suggestion that I commandeered Mr Snedden's VIP jet for my use this afternoon is totally false.

"Throughout the campaign Mr Snedden and I have each used one of the two BAC 111 jets in the VIP Squadron. Mr Snedden has had exactly the same facilities at his disposal as I have.

"Last week the BAC III that I was using was temporarily unserviceable. My staff and I transferred to a smaller and slower aircraft. Mr Snedden continued to use a BAC III.

"On Tuesday the Governor-General made use of the BAC III in which I flew to Melbourne on Monday. The aircraft required servicing after the Governor-General's flight.

"On the recommendation of the RAAF, the other BAC III was temporarily made available to me. Mr Snedden was provided with another, but equally fast VIP aircraft. This was the most efficient and convenient arrangement for the RAAF and for both Leaders. It took account of the transport requirements of both Parties.

"Neither I nor any member of my staff gave any instructions or advice on this matter. The arrangements were made by the Department of Defence and the RAAF."

CANBERRA. A.C.T.