



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 324
11 September 1974

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY REFERENCE - FOOTWEAR

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, today announced that he had sent a reference to the Temporary Assistance Authority on the question of temporary assistance for the Australian industry producing footwear and parts therefor.

Mr Whitlam said that imports of footwear were at high levels and the Government was concerned that the industry, which has been adjusting and restructuring over several years towards operation under a long term industry rate of duty, does not become unduly disrupted by greater import competition than originally intended. It is important, he said, for the Government to be able to have investigations carried out so that appropriate action can be taken where necessary.

Mr Whitlam made the point that this was the second reference to the Temporary Assistance Authority under the Industries Assistance Commission Act 1973. Under the Act the Authority is required to report to the Government (no later than thirty days from the date of the reference) on whether it is necessary that urgent action be taken to protect the industry in relation to the importation of any goods. Where the Authority finds that urgent action is necessary he is asked to report whether this can appropriately be provided by a temporary duty, by the temporary prohibition or restriction of imports or by a combination of both a temporary duty and the temporary prohibition or restriction of imports.

The Prime Minister also pointed out that should the need for temporary assistance emerge from the report of the Temporary Assistance Authority, goods not entered for home consumption would be subject to any temporary measures taken by the Government in the light of the report.